



490

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MAR 93



BATMAN

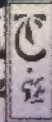
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THE SIGNAL'S BEEN FIXED,
BUT I'M STILL BROKEN...

GROGGY FROM THE SEDATIVES,
HEARTBEAT SLOW, COLD SWEAT
FROM THE KNEES DOWN, WEAK
AND WEARY... BUT IT DOESN'T
MATTER.

THE LIGHT
BECKONS.

DARKNESS MUST
ANSWER.

BATMAN
CREATED BY
BOB KANE.

DOUG MOENCH & JIM APARO
WRITER ARTIST

ADRIENNE ROY & STARKINGS
COLORIST LETTERER

SCOTT
PETERSON & DENNY
ASST. EDITOR O'NEIL
EDITOR

WHO RIDDLED THE RIDDLER?

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HaCSA ~ nom scan~



THE BOY IS A WONDER...

THERE IT IS -- THE NEXT ROOF.

AND SHOULD I STILL POSE AS THE BATMAN?



... BUT STILL ALL TOO OFTEN OUT OF HIS DEPTH.

YEAH, I GUESS...

MAYBE IF YOU HANG BACK... AND STICK TO THE SHADOWS... GORDON WON'T --

GORDON WILL KNOW.



YOU MIGHT FOOL OTHERS, BUT NOT HIM.

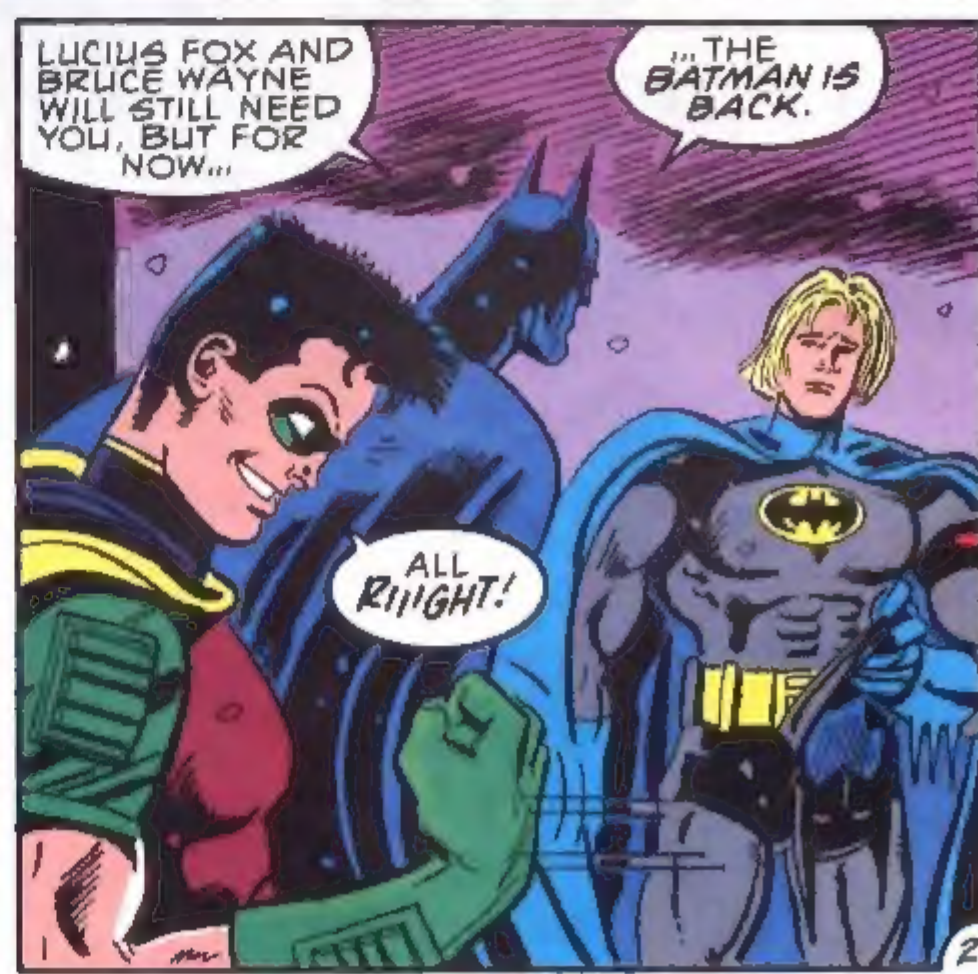
BAT-MAN.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, JEAN PAUL -- I'LL HANDLE IT FROM HERE.



BUT... WHAT DO I DO NOW?

GO HOME.



LUCIUS FOX AND BRUCE WAYNE WILL STILL NEED YOU, BUT FOR NOW...

... THE BATMAN IS BACK.

ALL RIGHT!



NOW WHERE THE DEVIL COULD HE --
HERE, GORDON.

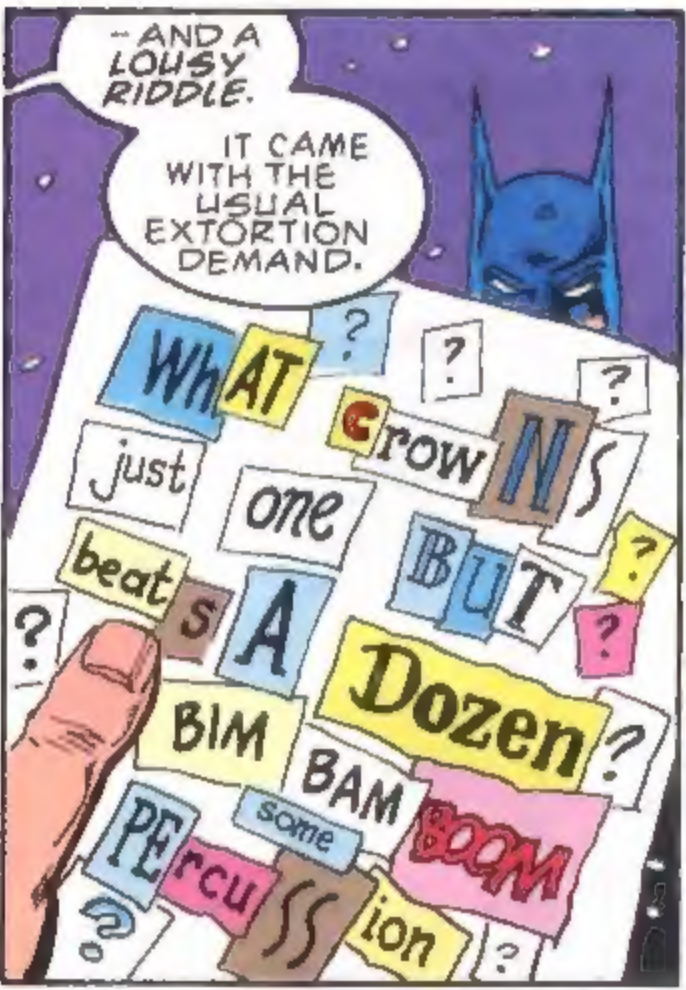
Eh?



SORRY I'M LATE.
WHAT HAVE YOU GOT?

GOT?
I'VE GOT LOTS OF THINGS...

I'VE GOT A POUNDING HEAD, A SOUR STOMACH, A PEEVED WIFE WHO'S PROBABLY HAVING DINNER WITHOUT ME --



-- AND A LOUSY RIDDLE.
IT CAME WITH THE USUAL EXTORTION DEMAND.



"WHAT CROWNS JUST ONE BUT BEATS A DOZEN? BIM BAM BOOM, SOME PERCUSSION." YOU CHECKED THIS --



-- FOR FINGER-PRINTS?

YES -- AND IT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT.

WHY WOULD HE TRY TO HIDE IT, WHEN THE RIDDLE ITSELF IS POSITIVE I.D.?

CROWN... DOZEN... PERCUSSION...

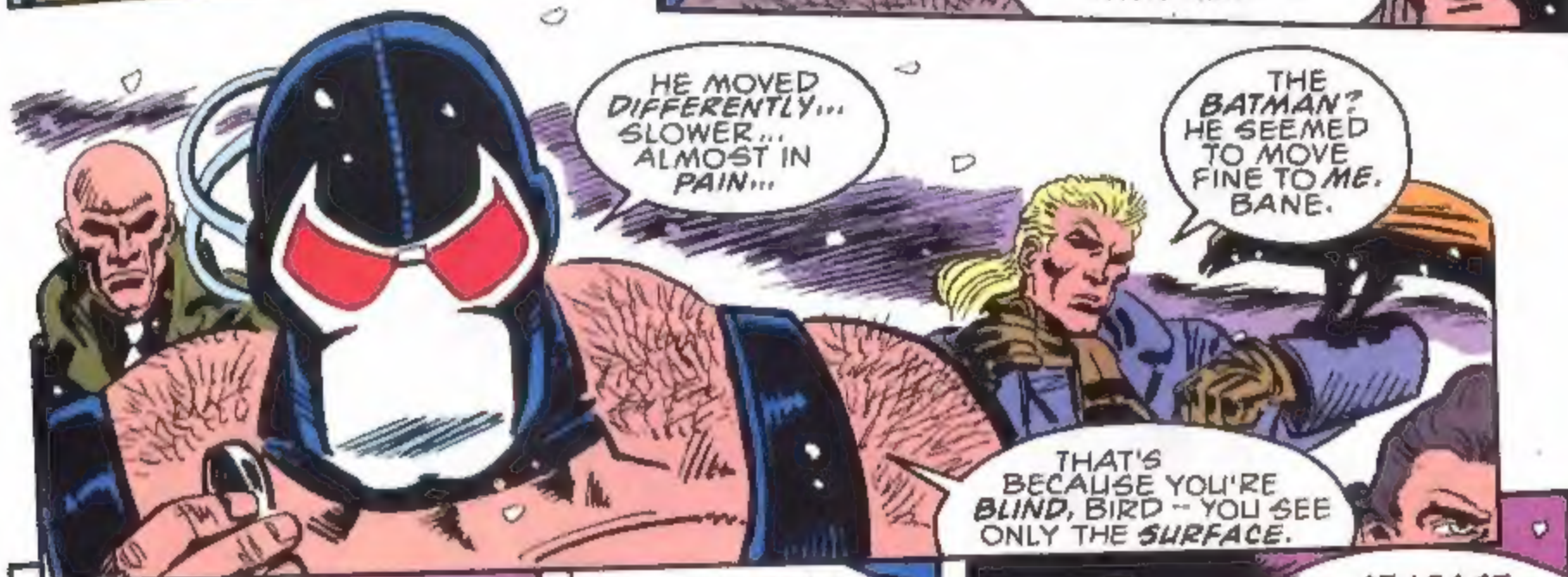
KLATCH

HE WOULDN'T TRY TO HIDE IT -- BUT SOMEONE ELSE... POSING AS HIM...



GOOD POINT... BUT NO POSING INVOLVED.

BULLOCK SAYS THE PRINTS CHECK OUT -- AS EDWARD NIGMA, A.K.A THE RIDDLER.





WHAT YOU GOT IN MIND, BANE?

YOUR VENOM, ZOMBIE... PUT TO A NEW USE...



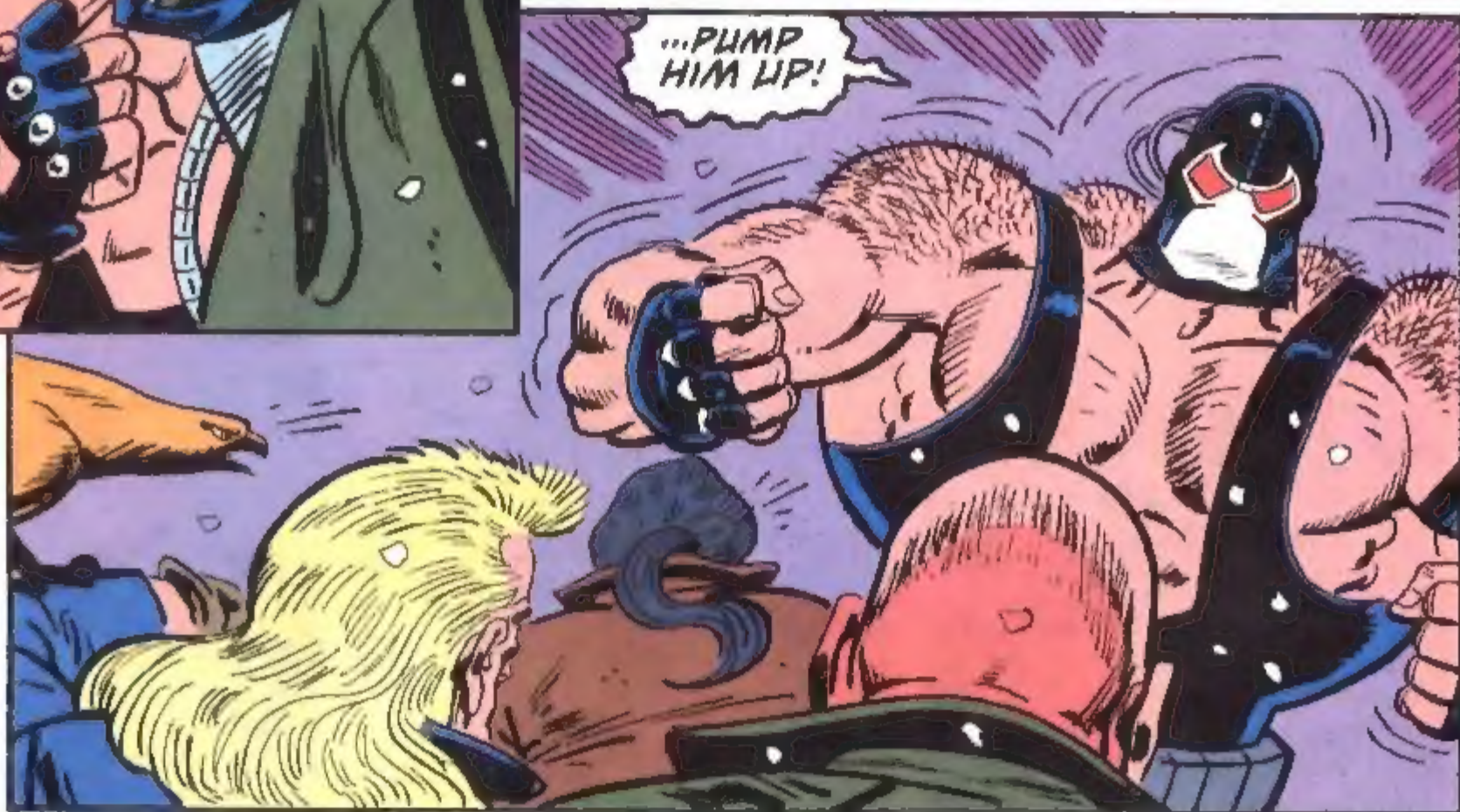
I'M GOING TO SOLVE THE RIDDLE FIRST...

TEK



...AND WHEN I FIND THIS RIDDLER, I'M GOING TO...

VS HSH



...PUMP HIM UP!



--SEEMED ALL PUMPED-UP SOMEHOW, ALMOST LIKE A HYPER-MUSCLE-FREAK-- AND THERE WERE THESE, LIKE, FEED-TUBES IN THE BACK OF HIS HELMET...

INJECTING SOME KIND OF CHEMICAL DIRECTLY INTO HIS BRAIN?

YEAH, THAT'S THE IMPRESSION I GOT -- MAKING HIM A VERY ANGRY DUDE.



AND THIS BANE IS MORE THAN JUST A MONSTER -- HE'S SHARP TOO.

HE KNEW JEAN PAUL WASN'T YOU -- SAW RIGHT THROUGH HIM -- AND HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW YOU THE WAY GORDON DOES.

I'LL HANDLE THE RIDDLER ON MY OWN.

BUT--



ON MY OWN.



I GOT THE SENSE HE WONDERED WHY IT WASN'T YOU -- AND HE MIGHT'VE EVEN FIGURED IT OUT.

FIGURED WHAT OUT?



WELL, THERE'S SOMETHING, YOU KNOW... **WRONG** WITH YOU.

NOTHING'S WRONG WITH ME -- AND NOW YOU CAN GO HOME TOO.



ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT... SHEESH.

YEAH



THE MINUTE I GET HIM BACK, HE'S GONE.

BUT FORGET HOME, MAYBE ARIANA WILL APPRECIATE MY COMPANY.

HARD TO FOCUS ON THE RIDDLE WHEN I KEEP THINKING ABOUT THE RIDDLER HIMSELF...

HE HASN'T MADE A MOVE ON ME SINCE HE TRIED TO SACRIFICE ME TO THE DEMON BARBATHOS - BUT WHY NOT?

MAYBE IT'S TAKEN HIM THIS LONG TO RECOVER FROM THE EXPERIENCE-- OR MAYBE HE'S BEEN CONFUSED UNTIL RECENTLY, CONVINCED HE WAS STILL IN THE GRIP OF THE DEMON...

EITHER WAY, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

HE'S BACK, AND HE'S GOT TO BE STOPPED... EVEN THOUGH I'VE ALREADY CRUISED THE STREETS FOR HOURS, STILL WITH NO FIX ON THE RIDDLE.

WHAT CROWNS JUST ONE BUT BEATS A DOZ--

WAIT A MINUTE--!

THE CLOCK TOWER ATOP NUMBER ONE GOTHAM PLAZA--

--A BELFRY CROWNING CITY HALL--

STMP

WRAOW SKREEEE

-- AND SET TO BLOW
UP AT THE STROKE
OF MIDNIGHT!

BIM
BAM BOOM,
SOME PERCUSSION--
IN ONLY TEN
MINUTES, AND STILL
NO SIGN OF THE
BATMAN...

WELL, HE'S
HAD HIS
CHANCE.

TIME TO
PRIME MY DEVICE
AND QUIT THE
BELFRY BEFORE--

**FREEZE,
RIDDLER!**

EH--? BATMAN--?
THEN YOU DID SOLVE
THE RIDDLE -- AND
YOU'VE COME TO
DISARM MY DEVICE?!

NOPE...

I'VE
COME TO
RIDDLE
YOU.

**TOK
TOK TOK
TOK
TOK**

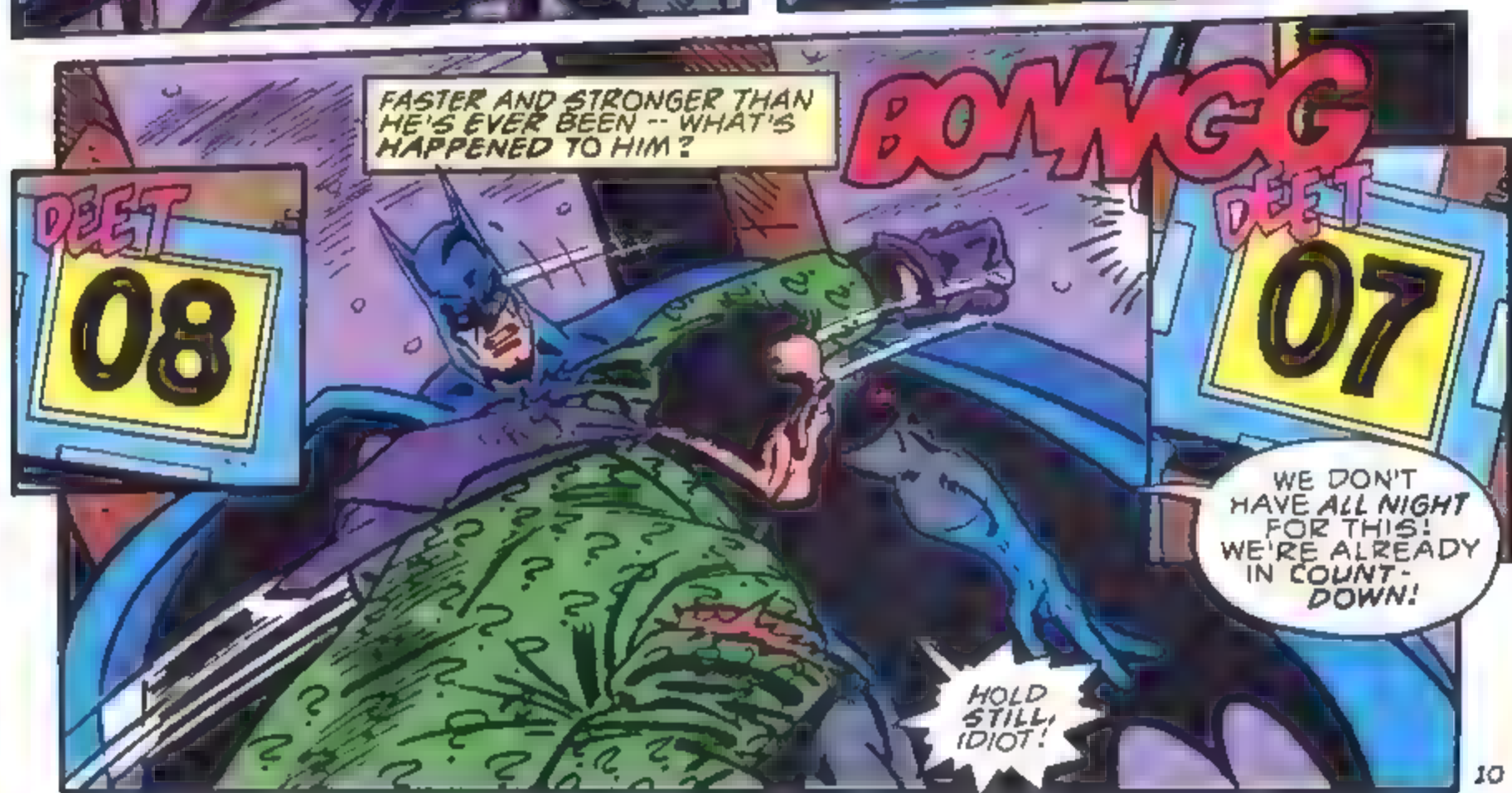
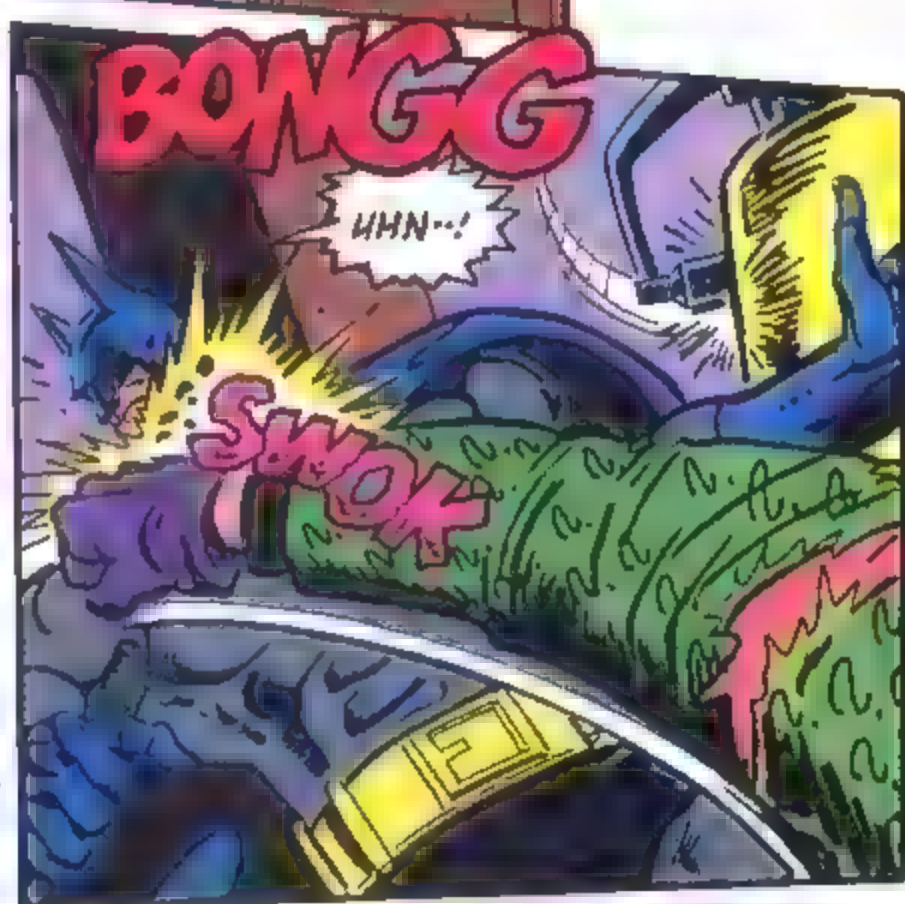
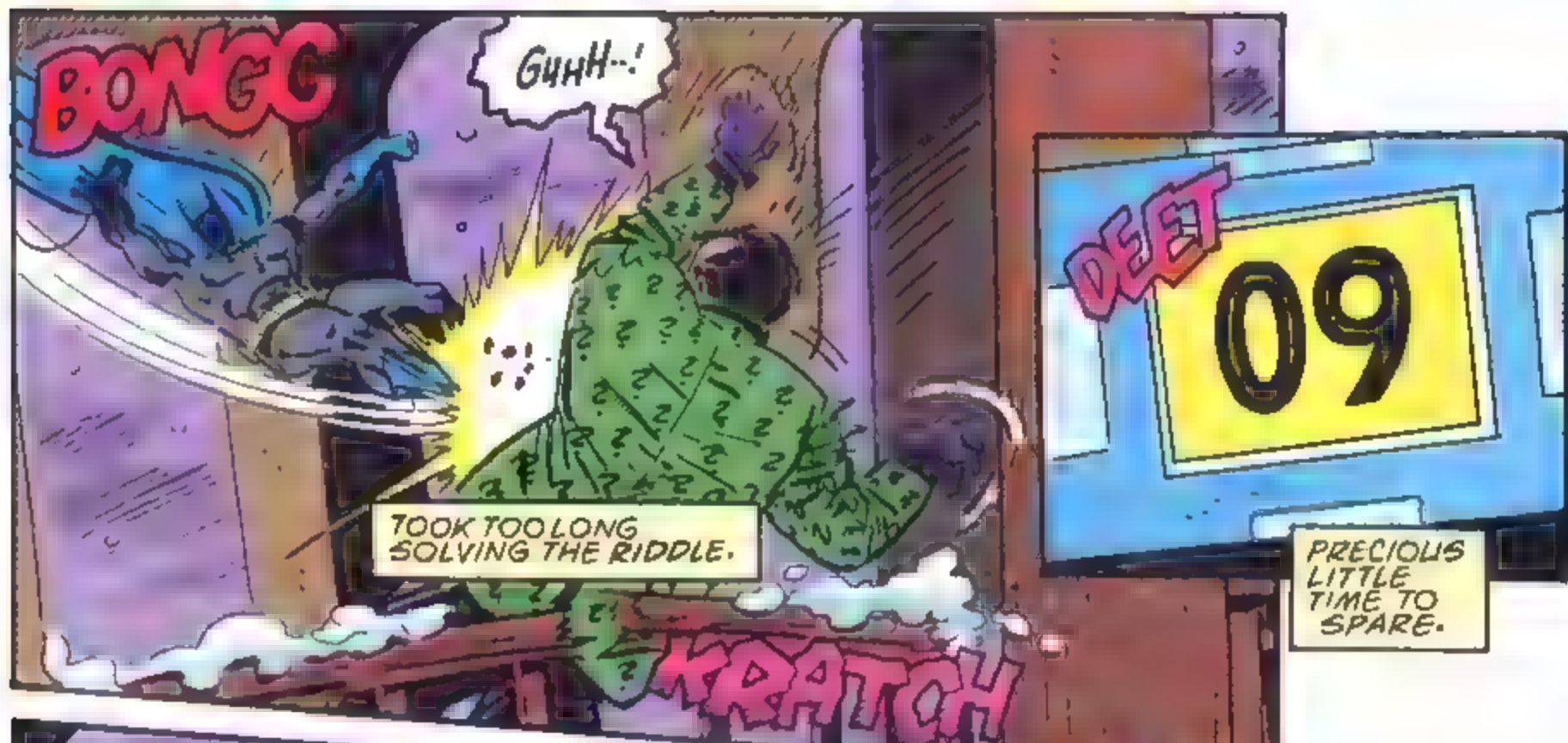
AGHK!!

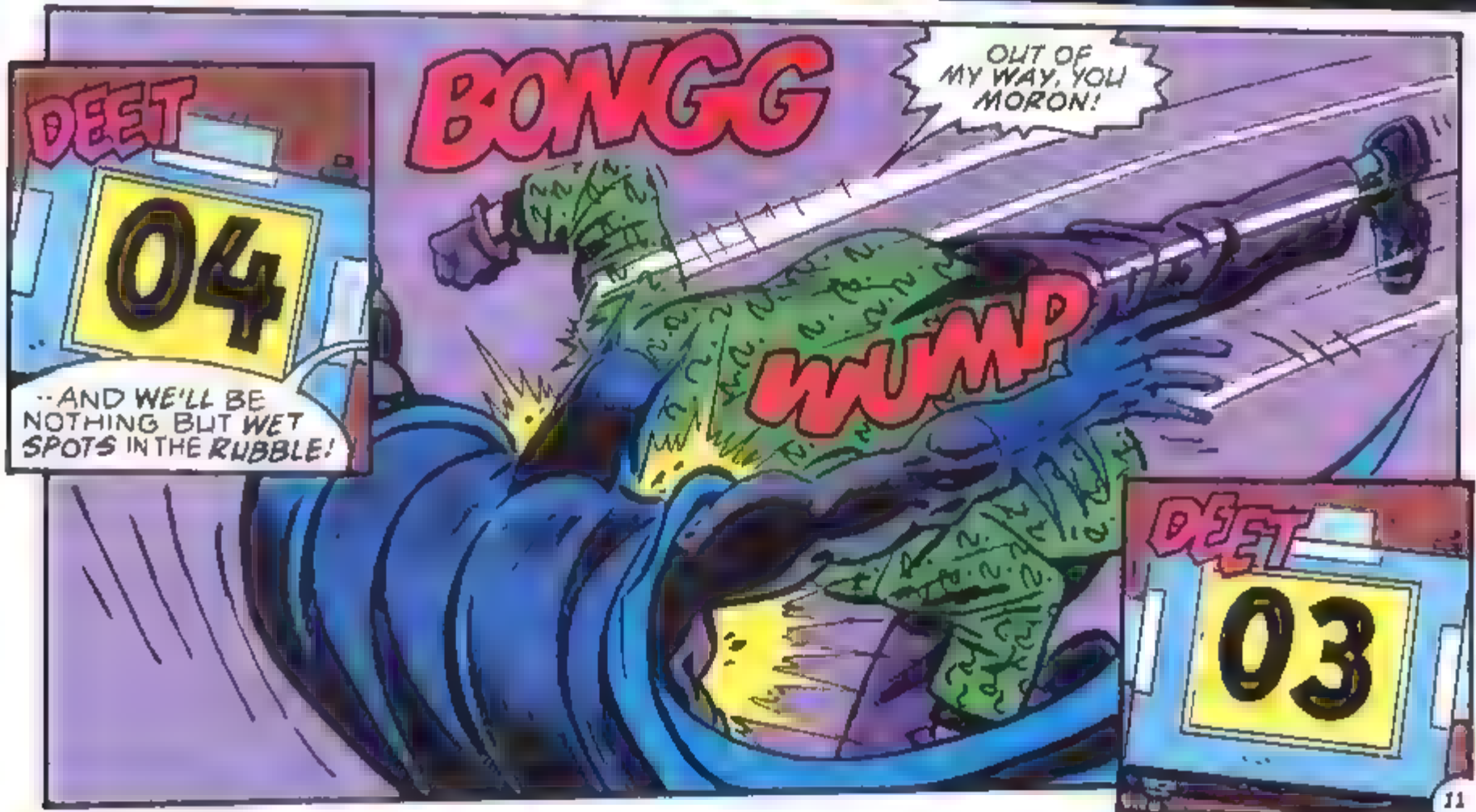
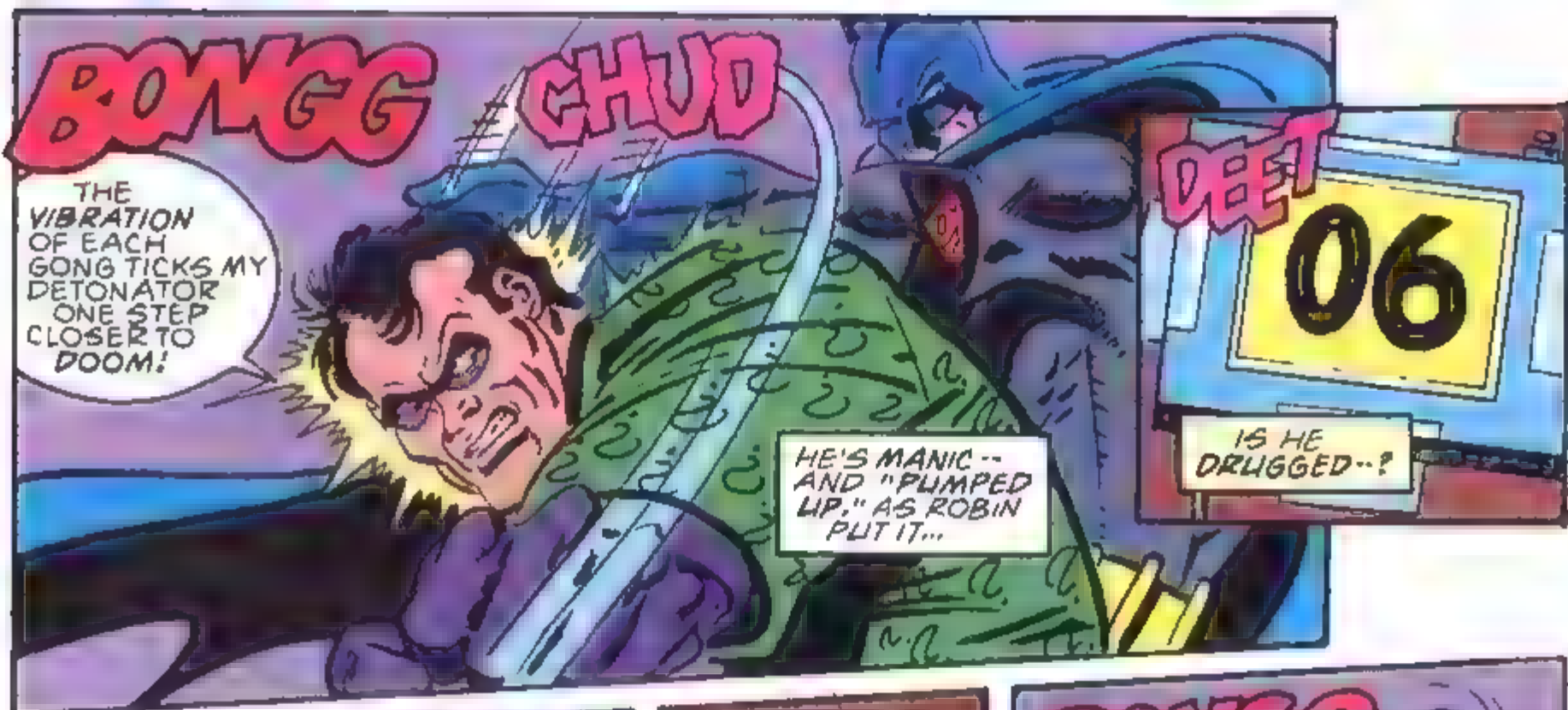
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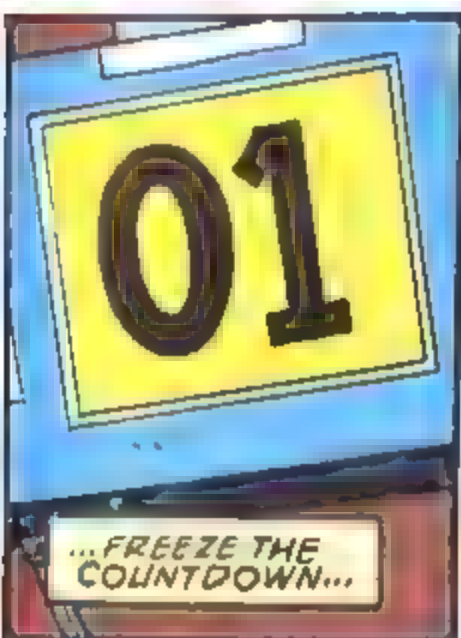
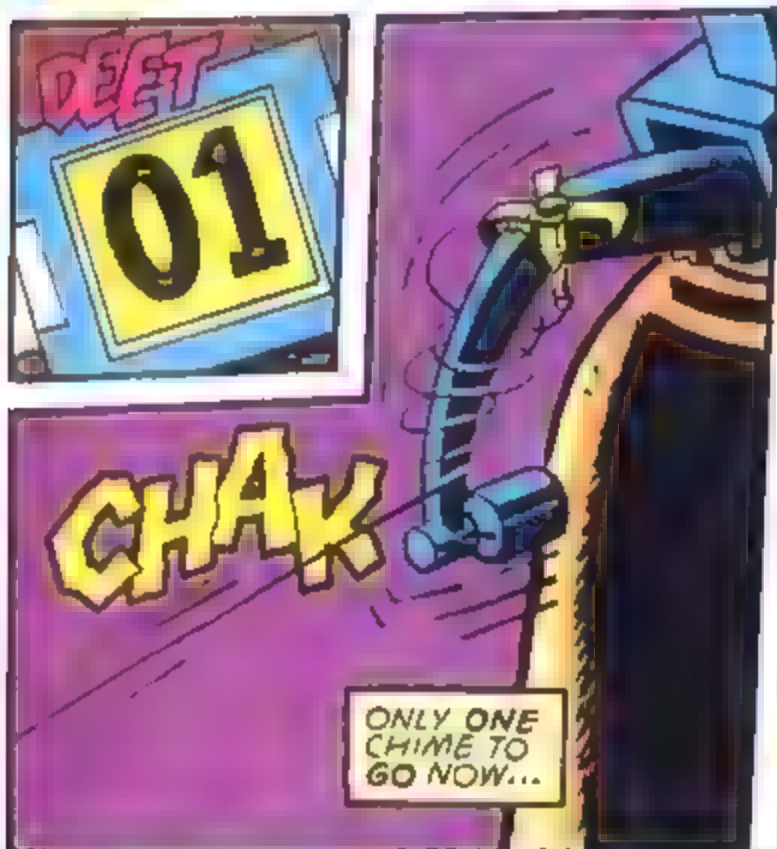
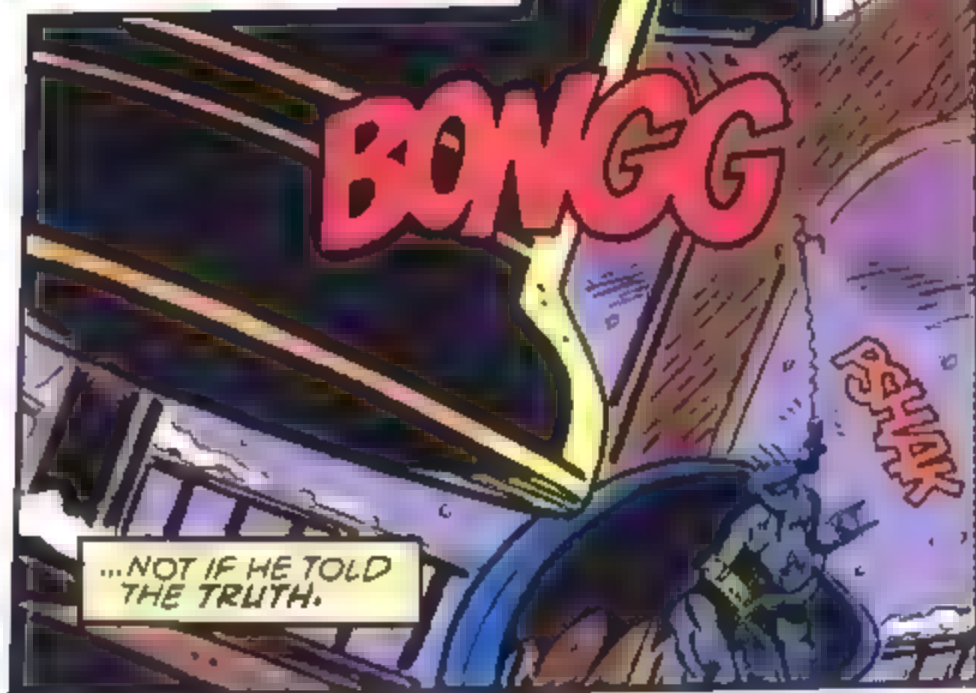
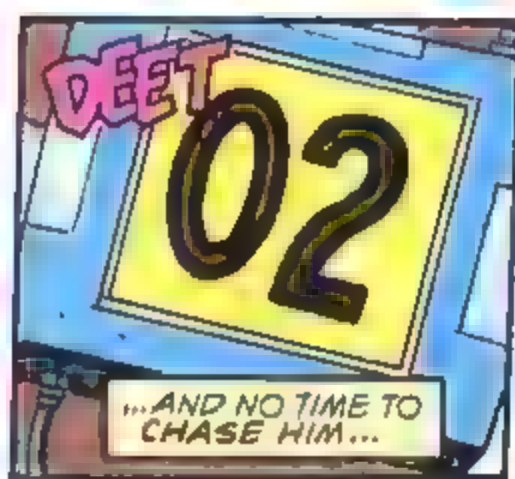
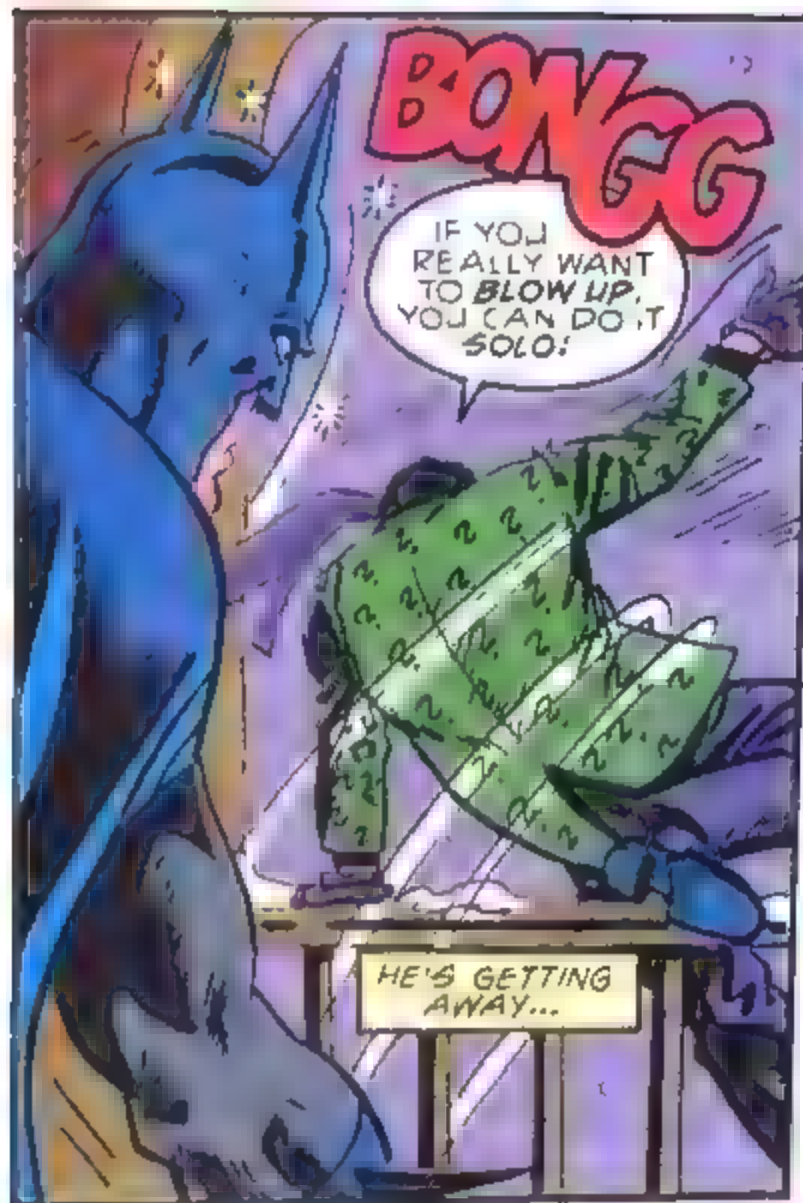
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THITCH

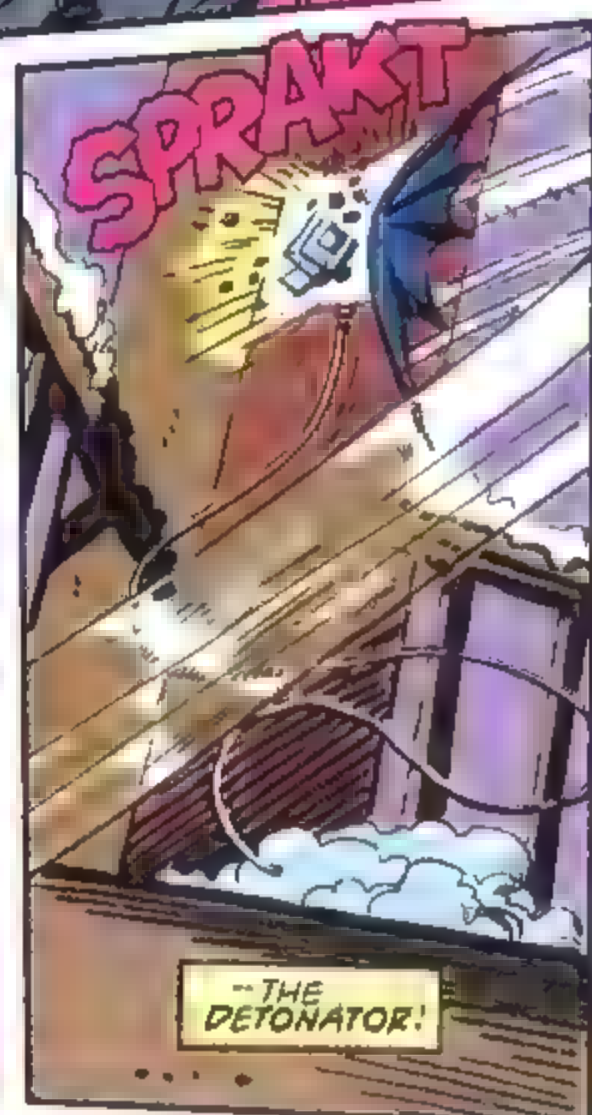
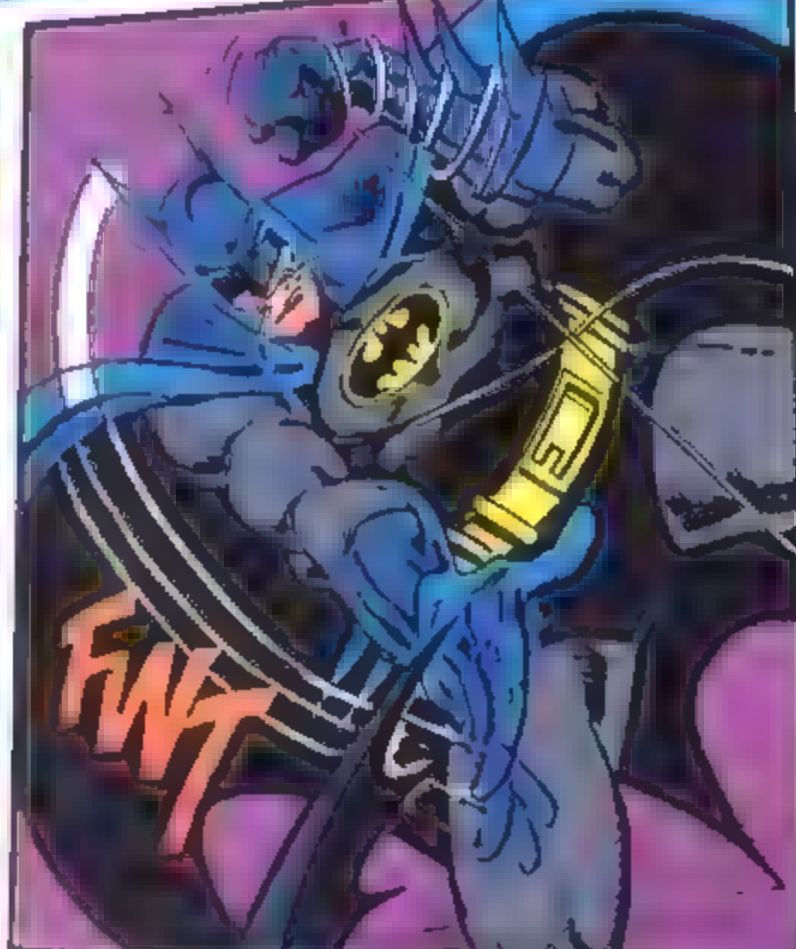
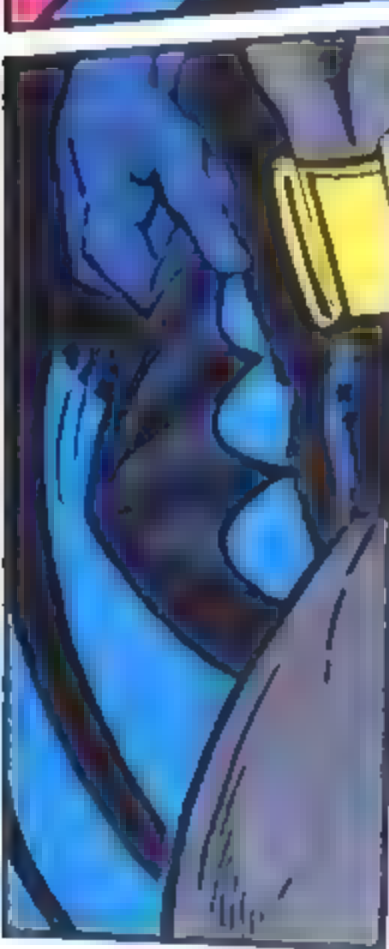
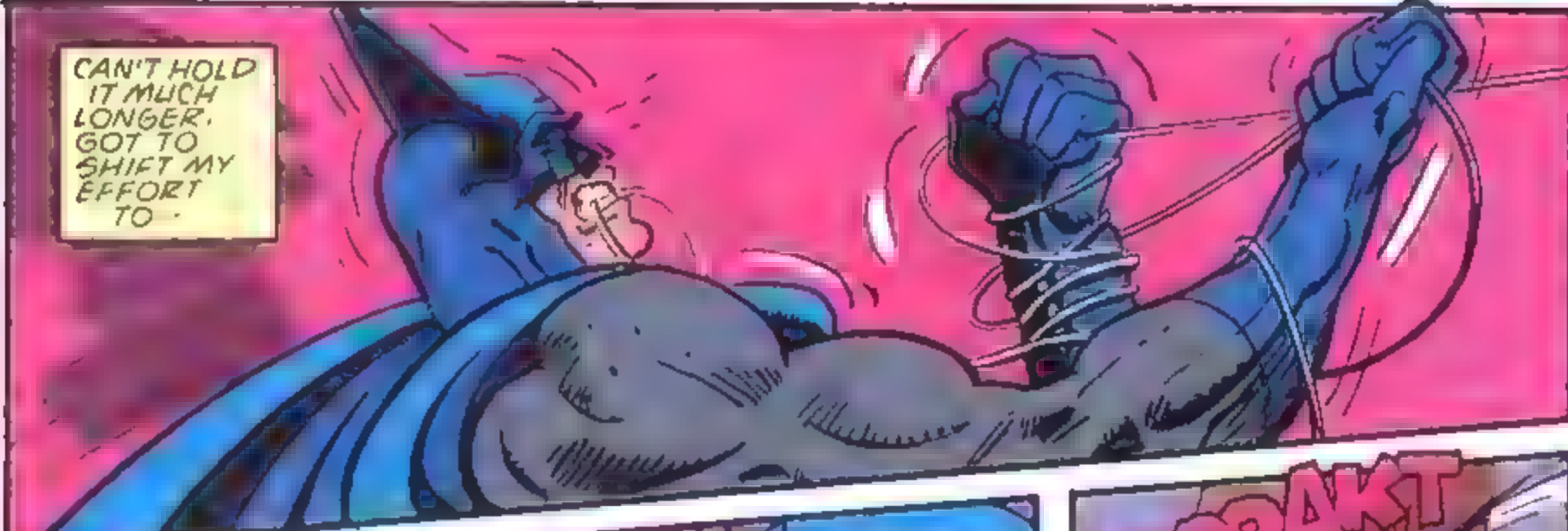




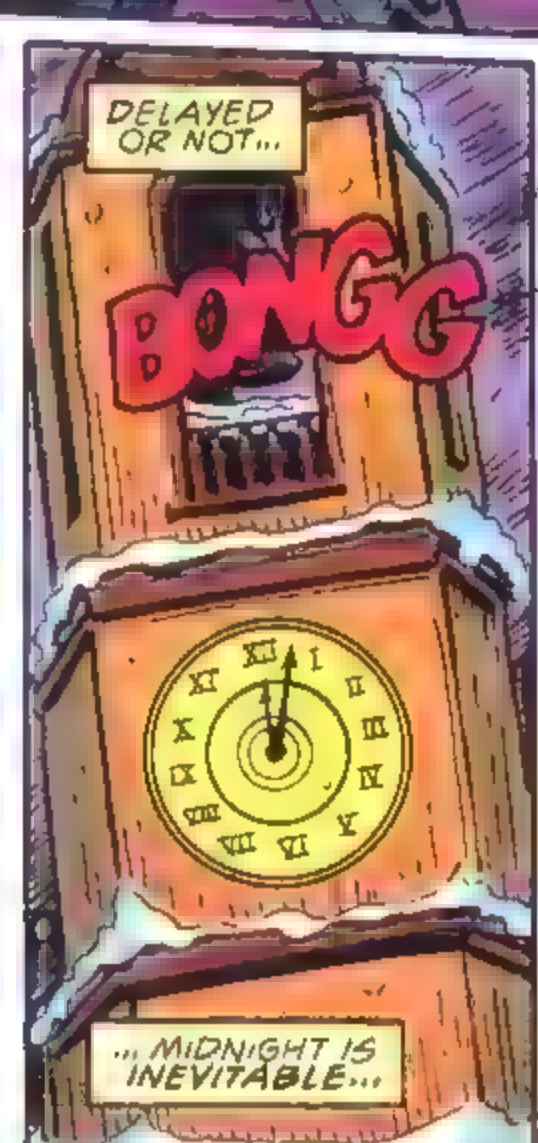




CAN'T HOLD
IT MUCH
LONGER.
GOT TO
SHIFT MY
EFFORT
TO -



--THE
DETONATOR!



DELAYED
OR NOT...

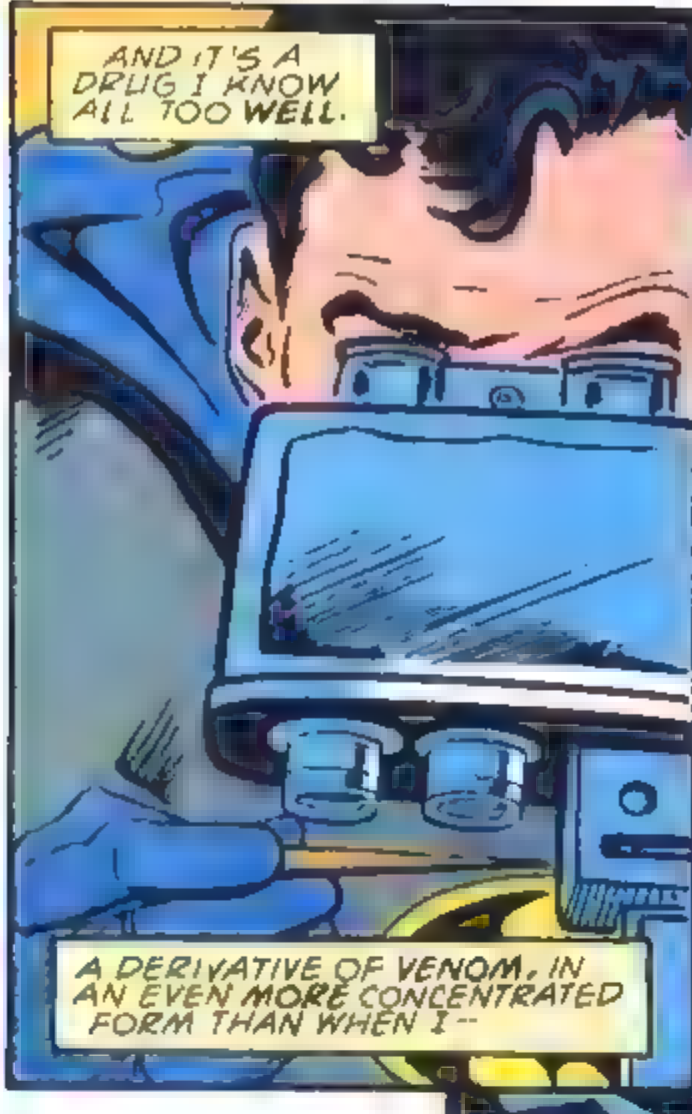
... MIDNIGHT IS
INEVITABLE...



.. BUT NO
EXPLOSION ..

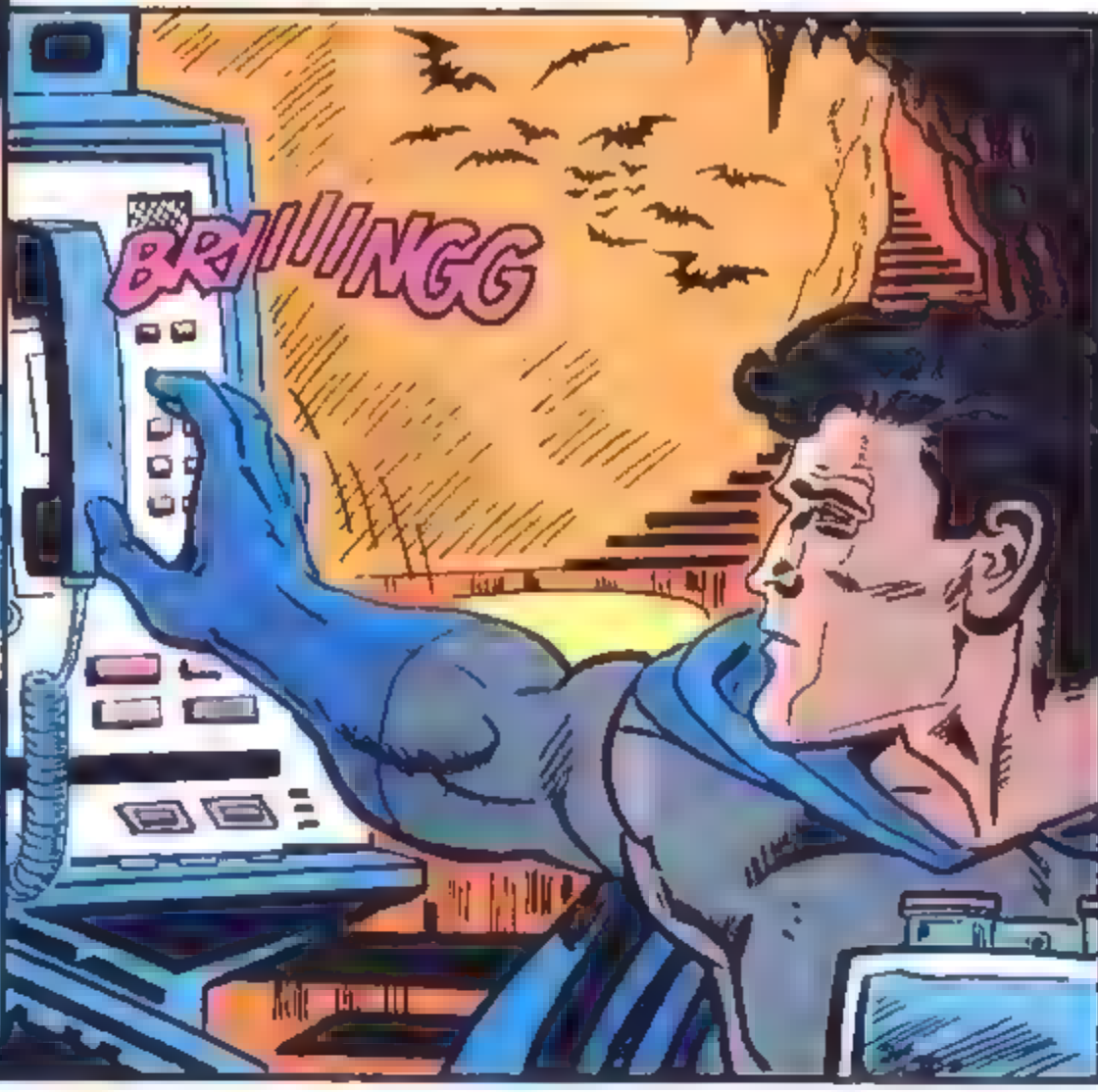
.. AND
A DART
OF SOME
KIND ..!

THE RIDDLER
WAS DRUGGED.

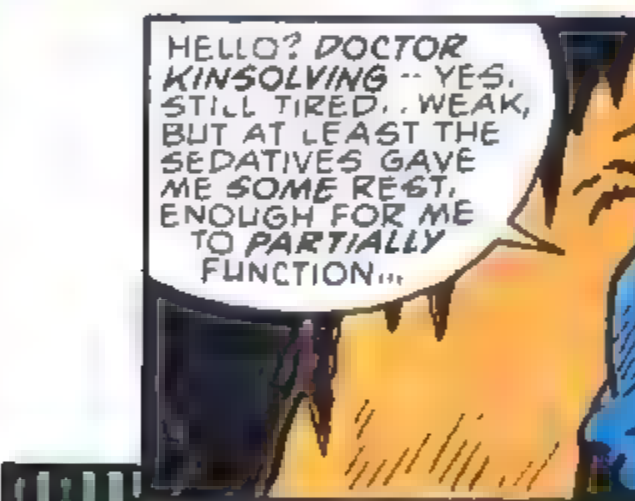


AND IT'S A
DRUG I KNOW
ALL TOO WELL.

A DERIVATIVE OF VENOM, IN
AN EVEN MORE CONCENTRATED
FORM THAN WHEN I--



BRILLINGG



HELLO? DOCTOR
KINSOLVING -- YES,
STILL TIRED... WEAK,
BUT AT LEAST THE
SEDATIVES GAVE
ME SOME REST,
ENOUGH FOR ME
TO PARTIALLY
FUNCTION...



WELL, YOU CAN'T
EXPECT TO BE UP TO
FULL SPEED AND
EFFECTIVENESS
RIGHT OFF THE
BAT.

BY
THE TIME
YOUR
PRESCRIPTION
RUNS OUT,
YOU SHOULD
BE RESTED
AND
RECEPTIVE
TO SOME
HOLISTIC
TREAT-
MENT.

THANK
YOU, DOCTOR
KINSOLVING...



SHONDRA

RIGHT --
THANK YOU,
SHONDRA. I
APPRECIATE
THE SPECIAL
ATTENTION.

NOT AT
ALL -- YOU'RE
A GOOD MAN.

WHY...
GOOD?



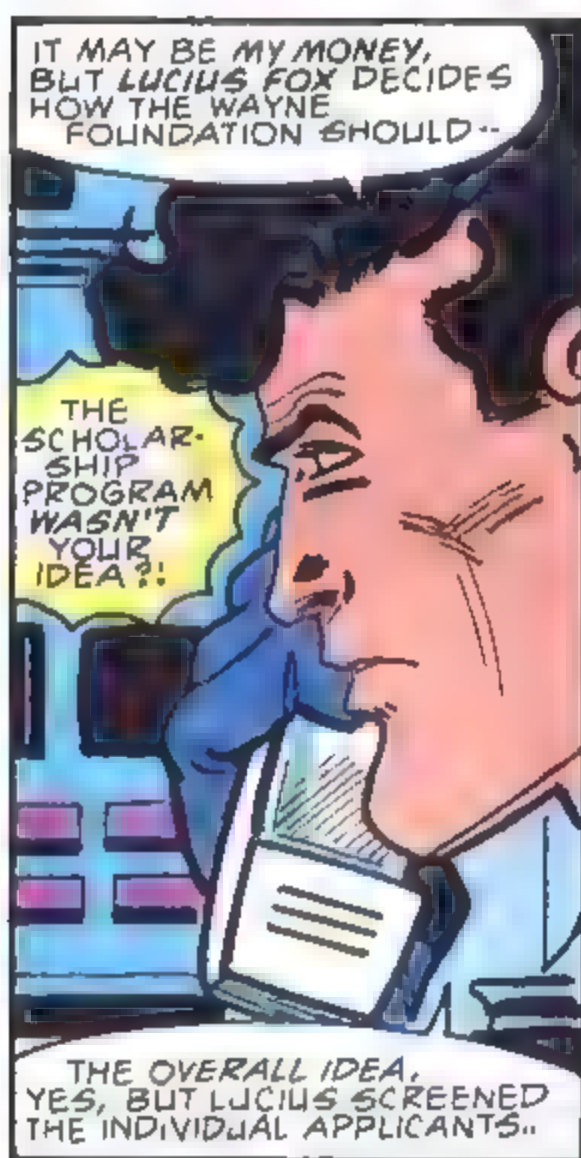
ONE EXAMPLE --
ADMITTEDLY BIASED --
YOU PAID EVERY
PENNY OF MY MED
SCHOOL COSTS -- A
FULL SCHOLARSHIP
-- AND YOU'VE YET
TO EVEN MENTION
IT.

I... I
HONESTLY
DIDN'T
KNOW...

IT MAY BE MY MONEY, BUT LUCIUS FOX DECIDES HOW THE WAYNE FOUNDATION SHOULD--

THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WASN'T YOUR IDEA?!

THE OVERALL IDEA, YES, BUT LUCIUS SCREENED THE INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS..

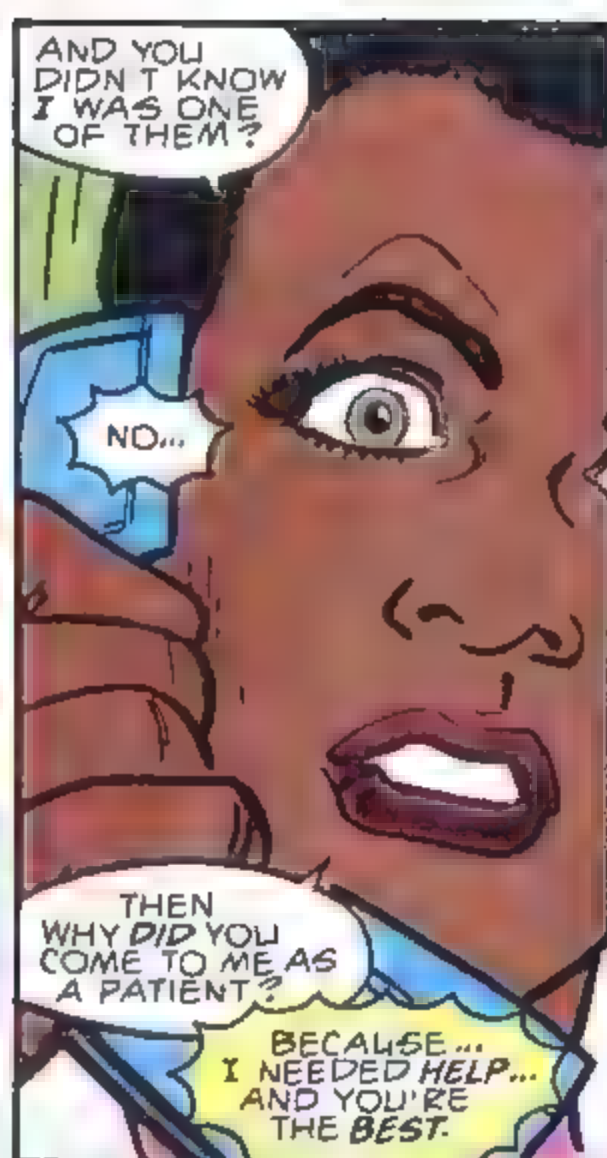


AND YOU DIDN'T KNOW I WAS ONE OF THEM?

NO...

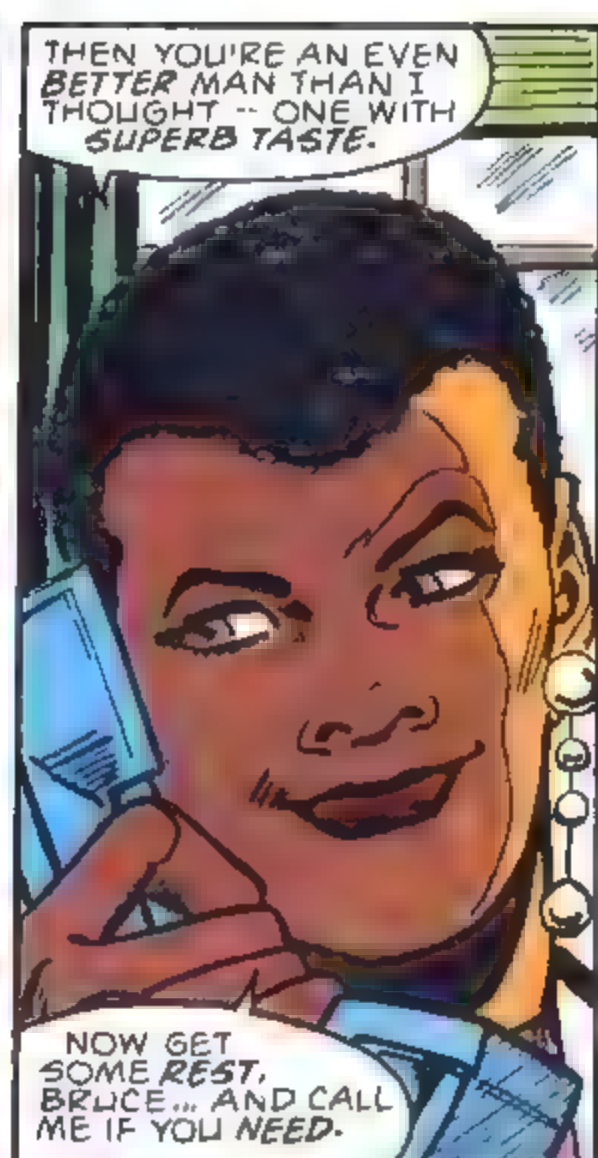
THEN WHY DID YOU COME TO ME AS A PATIENT?

BECAUSE... I NEEDED HELP... AND YOU'RE THE BEST.



THEN YOU'RE AN EVEN BETTER MAN THAN I THOUGHT -- ONE WITH SUPERB TASTE.

NOW GET SOME REST, BRUCE... AND CALL ME IF YOU NEED.

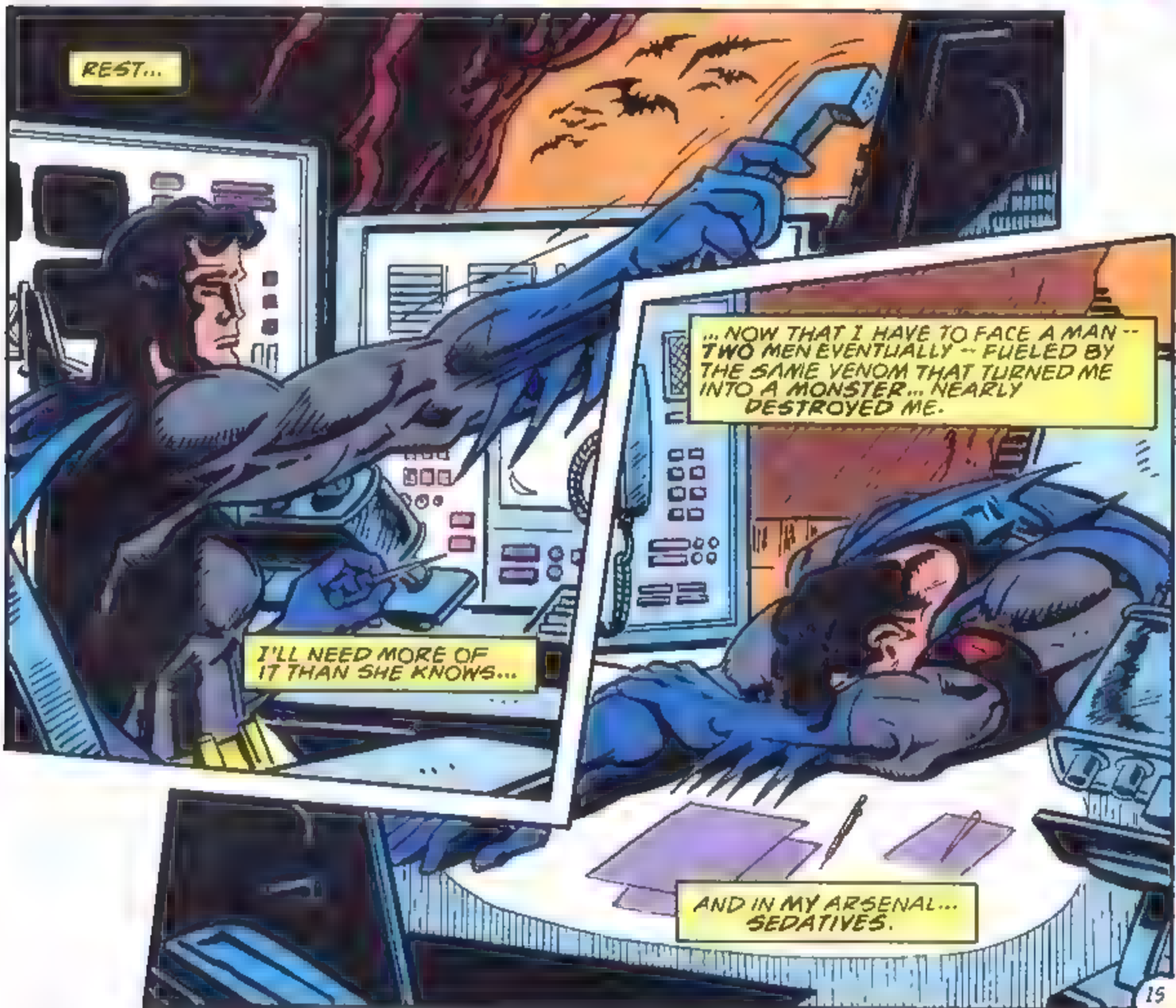


REST...

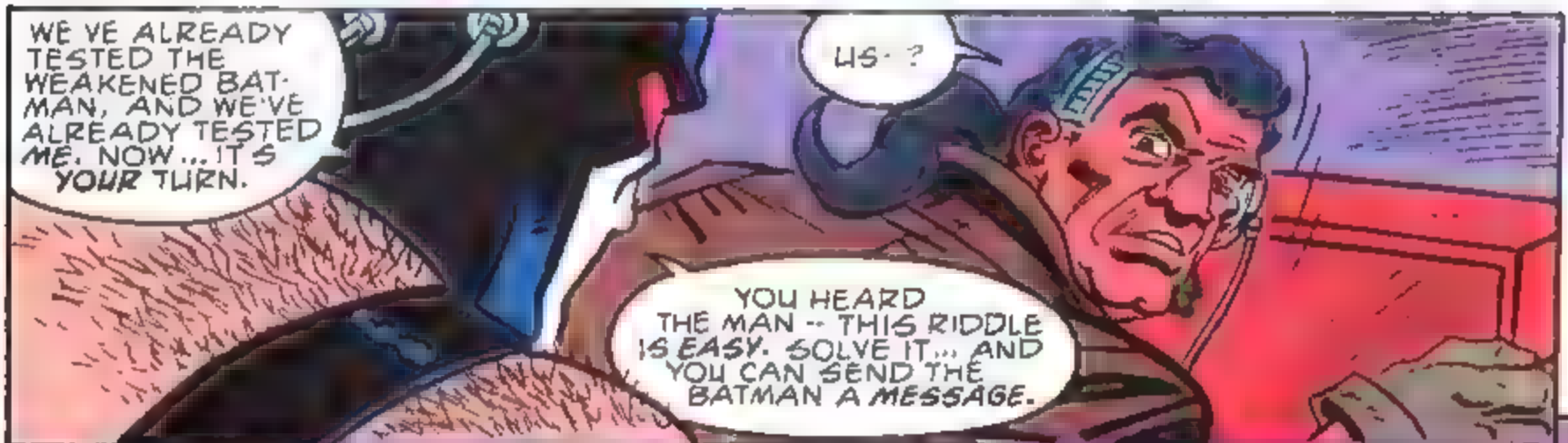
... NOW THAT I HAVE TO FACE A MAN -- TWO MEN EVENTUALLY -- FUELED BY THE SAME VENOM THAT TURNED ME INTO A MONSTER... NEARLY DESTROYED ME.

I'LL NEED MORE OF IT THAN SHE KNOWS...

AND IN MY ARSENAL... SEDATIVES.







WE'VE ALREADY TESTED THE WEAKENED BAT-MAN, AND WE'VE ALREADY TESTED ME. NOW... IT'S YOUR TURN.

US-?

YOU HEARD THE MAN -- THIS RIDDLE IS EASY. SOLVE IT... AND YOU CAN SEND THE BATMAN A MESSAGE.

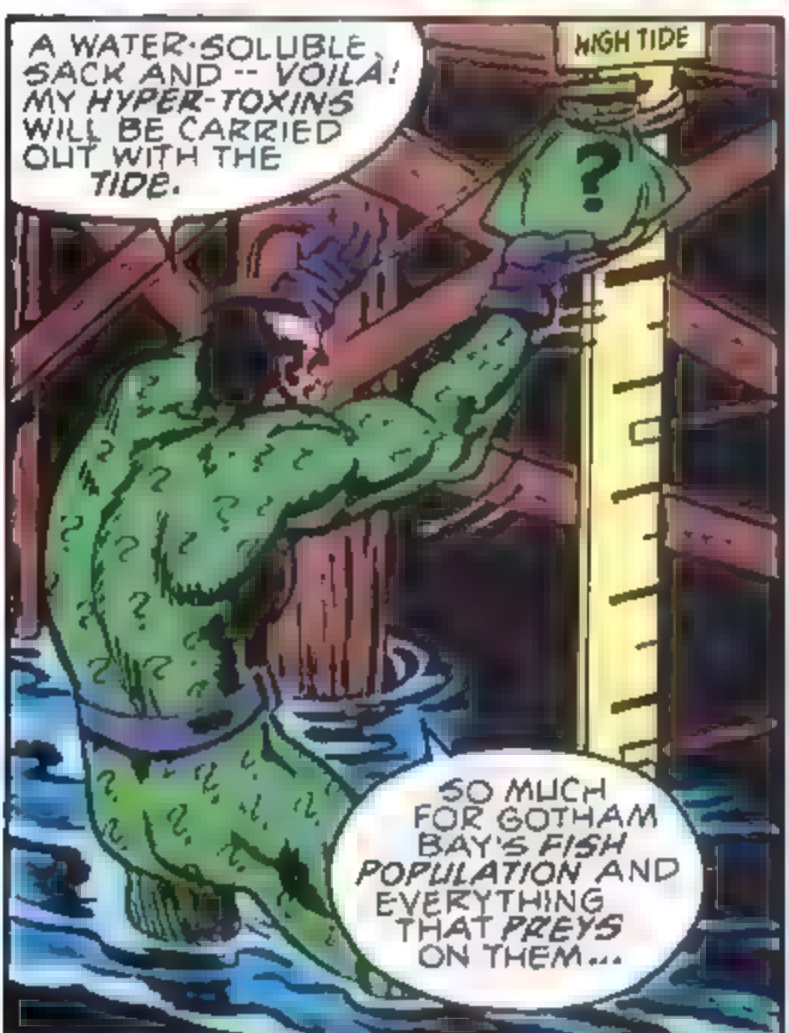


FAIL... AND MAYBE I'LL FIND NEW AIDES.

LM... SIDE POISON.. POISON SIDE.. POSEIDON?

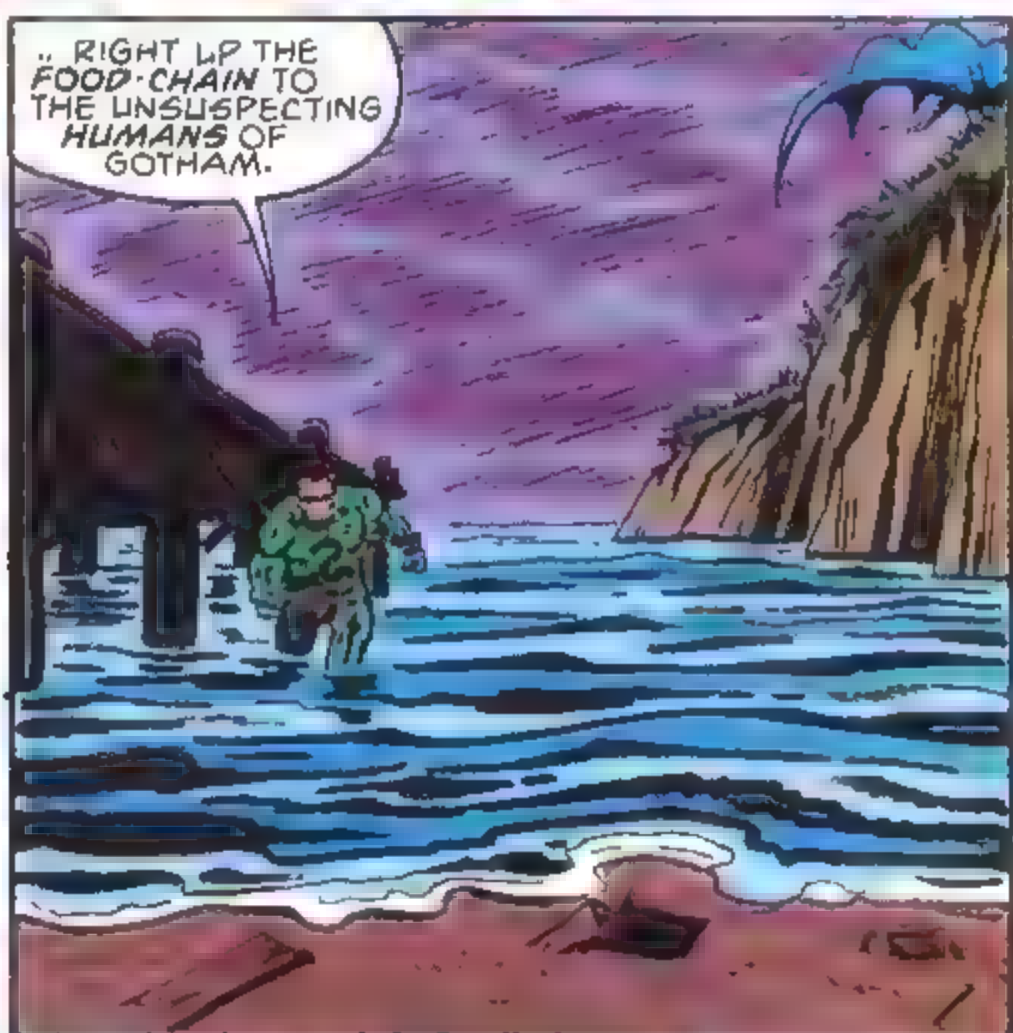


YEAH-- SOMETHING TO DO WITH WATER..?

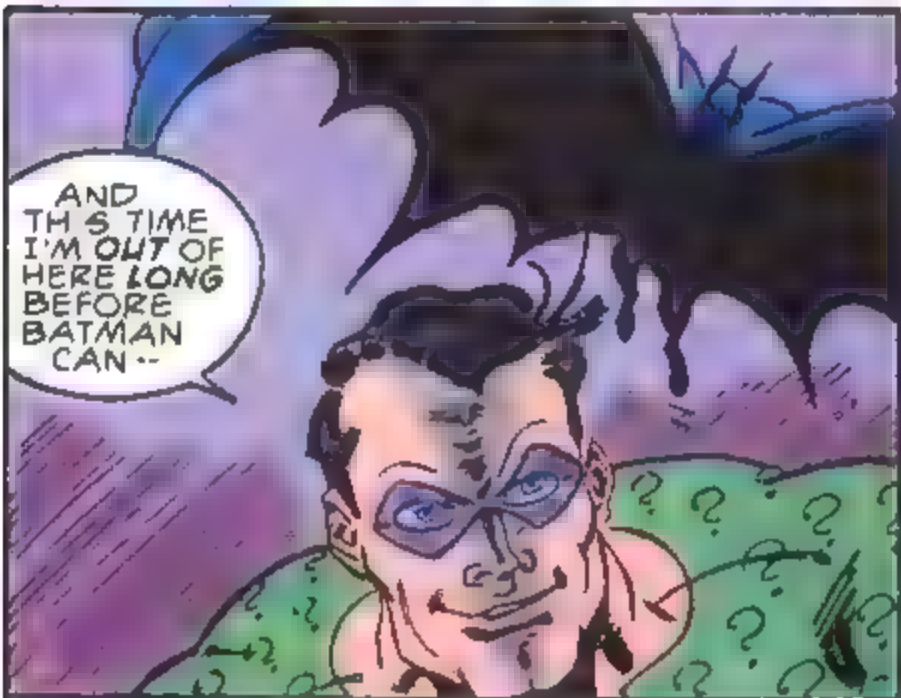


A WATER-SOLUBLE SACK AND -- VOILA! MY HYPER-TOXINS WILL BE CARRIED OUT WITH THE TIDE.

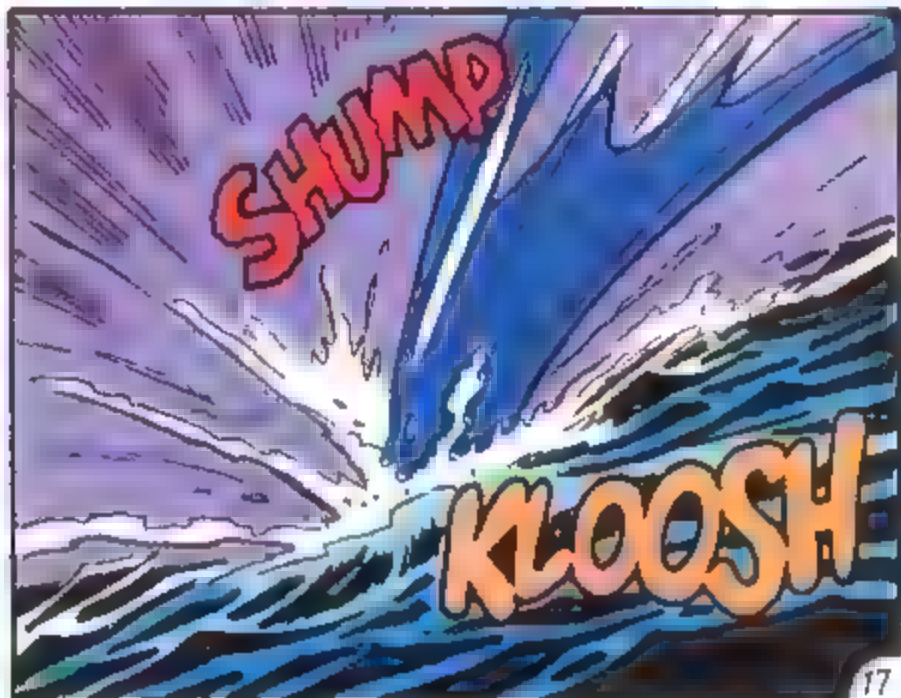
SO MUCH FOR GOTHAM BAY'S FISH POPULATION AND EVERYTHING THAT PREYS ON THEM...



.. RIGHT UP THE FOOD-CHAIN TO THE UNSUSPECTING HUMANS OF GOTHAM.



AND THIS TIME I'M OUT OF HERE LONG BEFORE BATMAN CAN--



SHUMP

KLOOSH

AGAIN, BATMAN -?

SWAK

BUT I
ALREADY
TOLD
YOU...

SIDE
HIGH TIDE



KUNCH

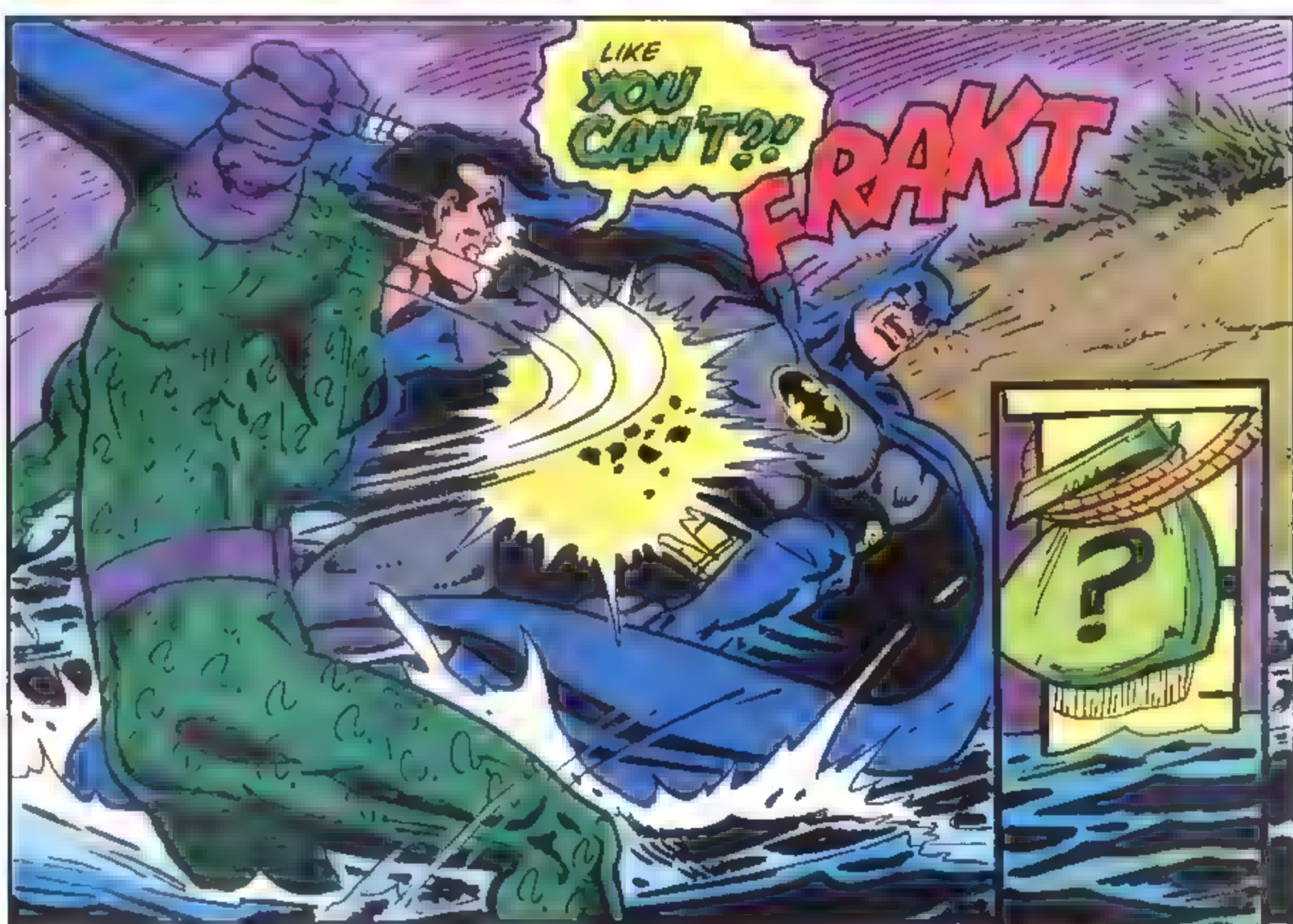
"I CAN'T
BE HURT
NOW!"

MAYBE
NOT,
RIDDLER...

IT'S TRUE -- HE'S
CRAZED, UTTERLY
BEYOND PAIN.

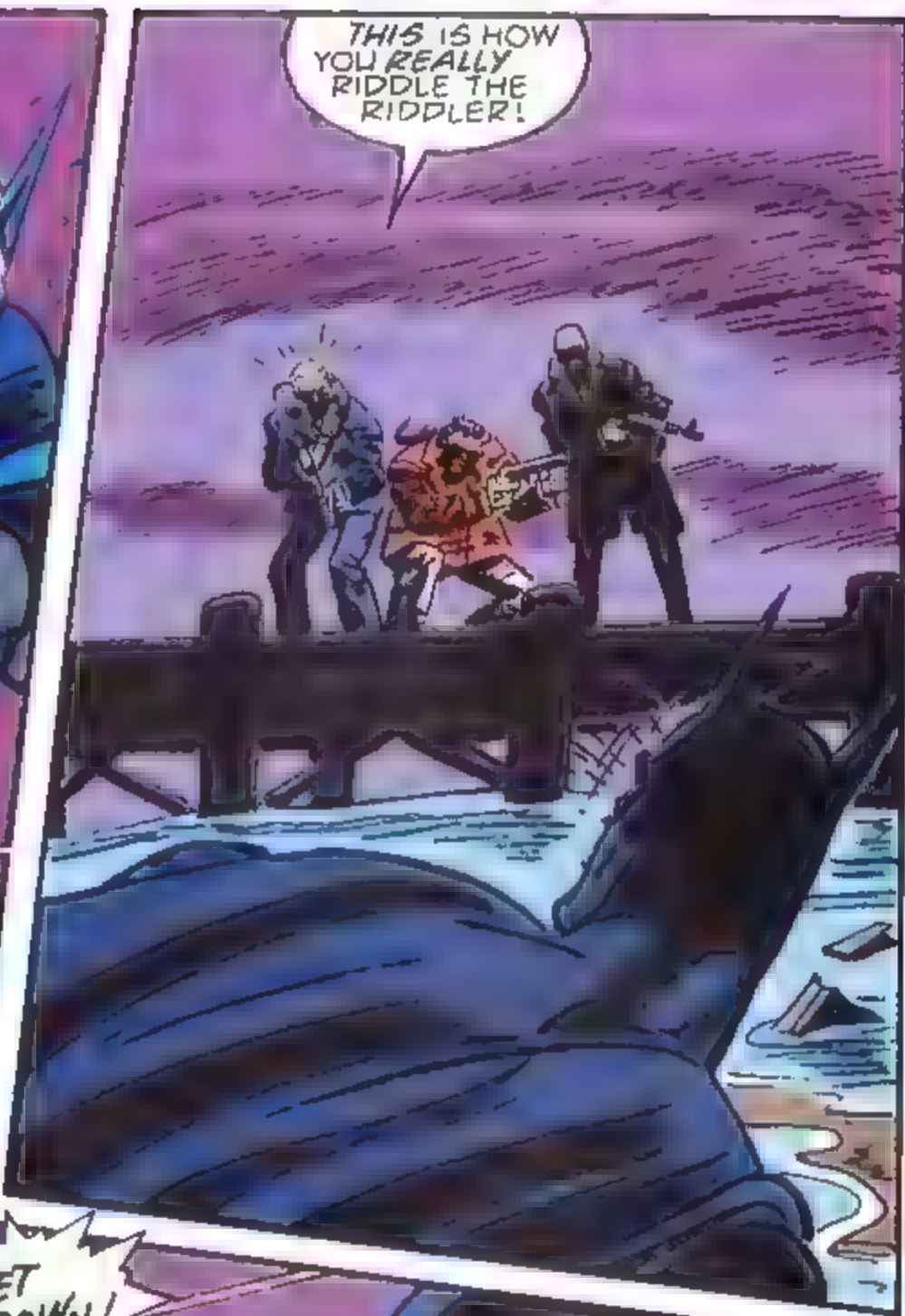
GLWOK

... BUT
YOU CAN BE
STOPPED!

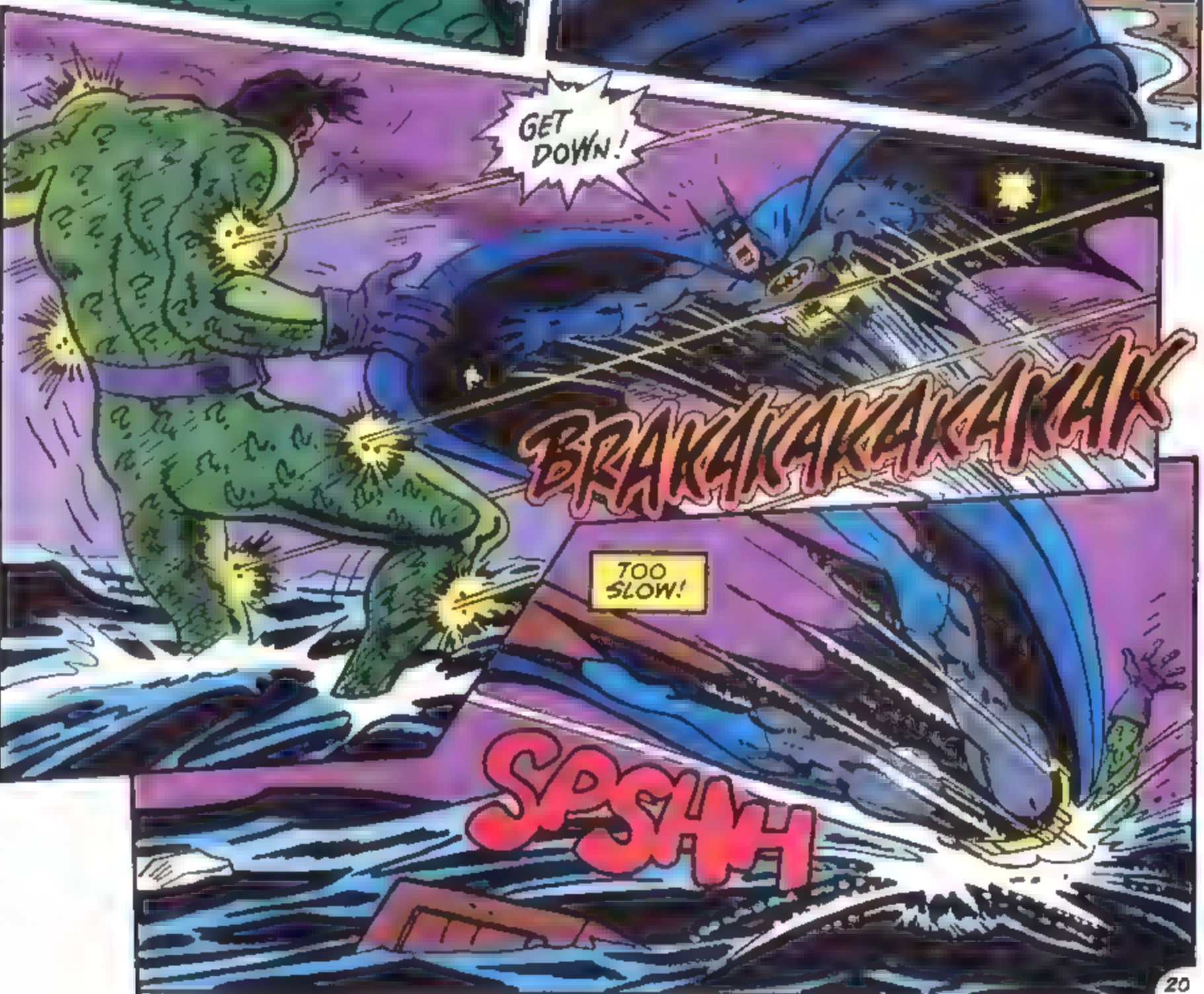




HEY, BATMAN!



THIS IS HOW YOU REALLY RIDDLE THE RIDDLER!



GET DOWN!

BRAKAKAKAKAKAK

TOO SLOW!

SPASH



TOO SLOW TO SAVE
THE RIDDLER...

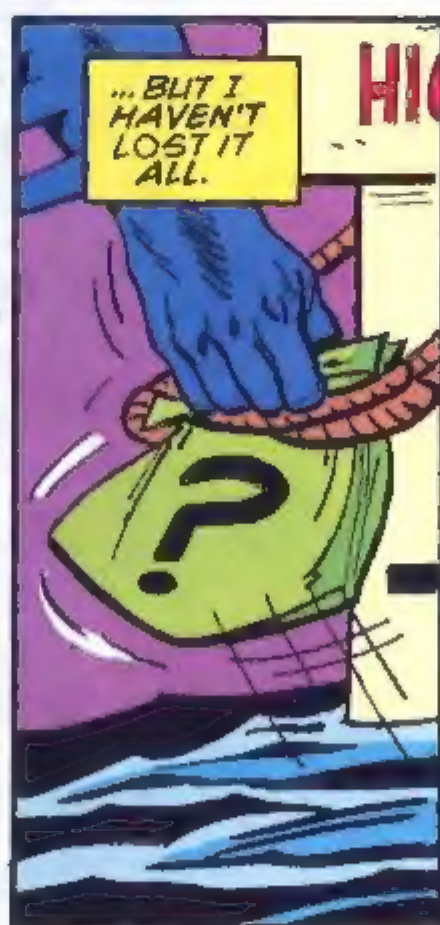


... AND TOO SLOW TO
STOP THE THREE WHO
GUNNED HIM DOWN.



I'VE LOST MORE
THAN JUST A
STEP...

HARBOR
SIDE
HIGH TIDE



... BUT I
HAVEN'T
LOST IT
ALL.



THIS IS THE BATMAN.
I HAVE A MAN DOWN
AND I NEED AN
AMBULANCE FAST --
EMT -- AT THE HARBOR-
SIDE HIGH TIDE
MARKER.

WHERE THE TIDE RISES
ONLY WHEN IT'S LOW.



YOU ALMOST BEAT HIM TO THE PUNCH, EVEN WITHOUT ME -- AND EVEN THOUGH HE SEEMS TO BE RECOVERING FROM WHATEVER WAS WRONG...

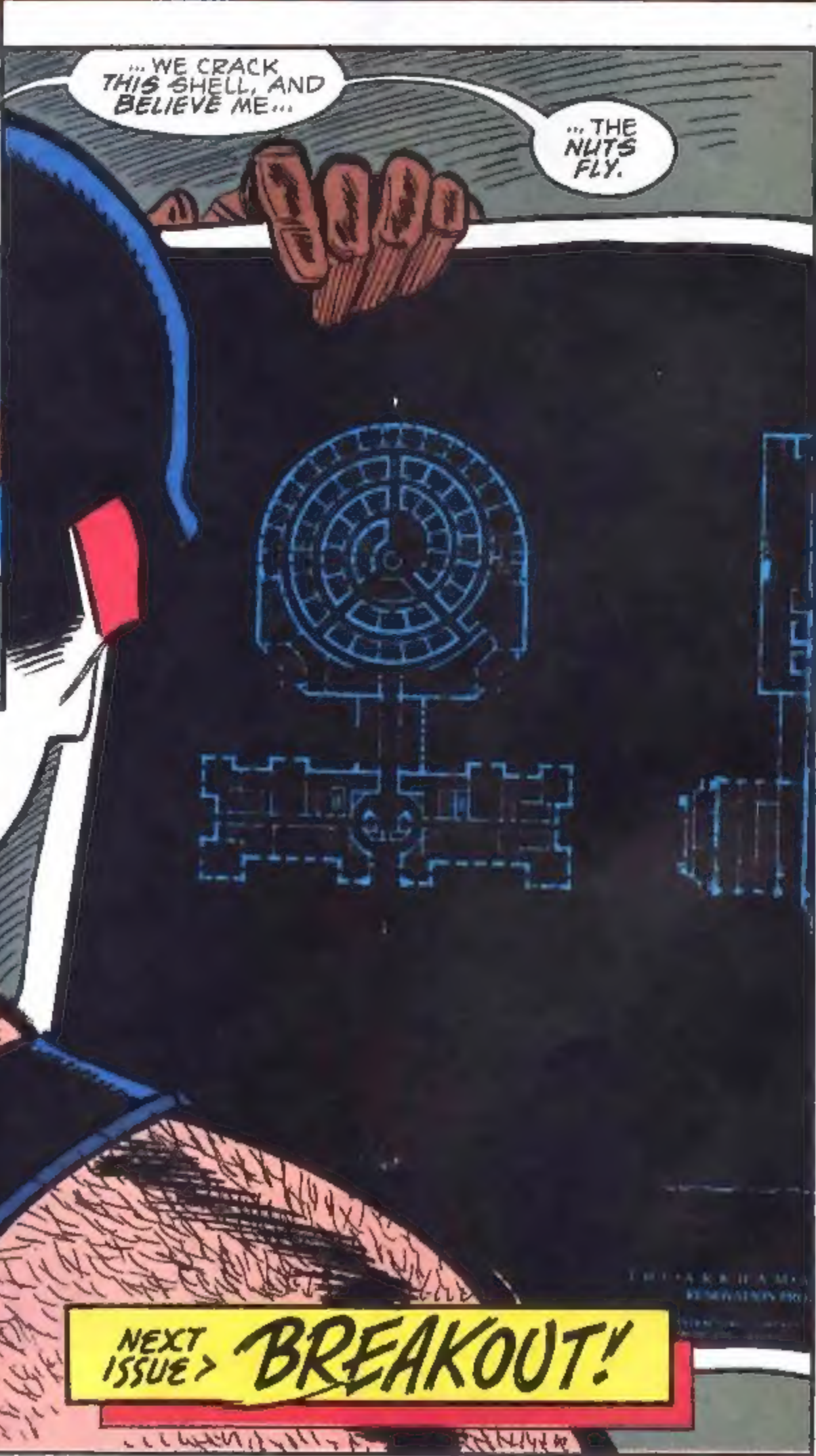
BUT THIS RIDDLER WAS STILL TOO EASY. WE NEED TO TEST HIM -- WEAR HIM DOWN AGAIN -- WITH MORE FORMIDABLE FORCES...



WE NEED FRENZY.

WE NEED NAKED MADNESS ITSELF.

IN WHICH CASE, I'M WAY AHEAD OF YOU, BANE...



... WE CRACK THIS SHELL, AND BELIEVE ME...

... THE NUTS FLY.

NEXT ISSUE > **BREAKOUT!**

BAT-SIGNALS

DC COMICS

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Dear Scott,

Glad to see the return of Black Mask! Keep those older Bat-foes coming! Doug did a decent job of keeping Black Mask's history intact. This looks like it'll be one heckuva story!

Funny how we should suddenly see Lucius Fox appear after years in comics limbo. Let's see more of him and the Wayne Foundation in upcoming issues!

Bob Elinskas
Utica, New York

Check out this month's DETECTIVE COMICS—issue #657, to be exact—for lots more of Lucius and the Wayne Foundation, with a generous helping of Robin and Azrael thrown in for good measure.



Dear Denny,

BATMAN #484 was a good read. I didn't think much of Black Mask the first time around, so I was pleasantly surprised to find him formidable this time. I think he knows full well Skullface is the Batman. Skullface's escape from the Batman was way too easy.

I enjoyed Tom's art this issue, but thought him better in CAT-WOMAN DEFIANT. I guess Jim Aparo needed a break. Don't blame him at all, but hope he returns soon. Jim does do the best Batman around.

It's great to see that, like several years before, all the creators work hard instead of riding a movie's coattails every month.

Getting fire insurance,
Keith Kimball
Tucson, Arizona

Movie? Television show, you mean...



Dear Bat-guys,

What the heck is this putrid filth somebody drew with a Crayola? I thought Jim Aparo was going to be drawing Batman. He might not be able to draw Robin really great, but he can draw the rest of the cast perfectly...not to mention that he is the all-time great Bat-artist. The art in this issue is horrible. I'll cite

one example: every page. I'm not trying to be mean. I'm sure that these artists are better suited to different characters.

Robin IV
Saginaw, Michigan



Dear Denny,

Boy, this is really going to hurt me more than it's going to hurt you. Honest! But, I'll do what I must...

Excuse me, but what is the deal with these "guest artists"? Sure, these new artists need exposure, but on a top title like BATMAN? I was always under the impression that you had to have made a name for yourself before being allowed on a top comic.

It's bad enough that I have to choke down another story about the Black Mask (whom I can't stand even a little), but the art is just terrible. And by the time we get to the last page it's even worse! Just look at Batman and Robin! Who are those two fat costumed heroes? Anyone we know and love?

Michelle E. Koller
Romeo, Michigan

Elvis? Is that you? Where have you been? And who's that with you?



Re: BATMAN #484

I liked the story, the suspense is there, Vicki's appearance and all, but **where's the beef?** The art was pathetic. Unless Tim put on about 75 pounds and had his head shrunk and Batman dyed his hair blond within the last month, I think it's time for somebody new. At least get an artist who keeps things proportionally correct, keeps hair colors constant and remembers Batman has a Bat-logo on his chest. Art 2, Story 6, Cover 4.

Brian Carpenter
President, Robin Fan Club
Webster, New York

Batman was still wearing his disguise, hence the blond hair.



Dear Denny,

I'll lay a pretty big bet that Jim Aparo was not the artist on issue #484. What a mistake! So anyway, I start reading. First impressions are that I don't much like the art. I read a bit further. Not too bad actually, I think. Suddenly, I'm in love. These guys are great! I don't recall seeing Grindberg and Scott in any other title, but what a find!

Robert Florence
102 Wallacewell Rd.
Balornock, Glasgow
Scotland

P.S. I need pen friends. I'm fifteen years old and also like Guy Gardner. Girls apply to address above. (Oh, yeah. Boys. Them too, I suppose.)

Tom is no stranger to the Batman, having drawn a DETECTIVE annual, as well as CAT-WOMAN DEFIANT and BRIDE OF THE DEMON. Trevor, meanwhile, is the regular inker on GREEN LANTERN. Tom and Trevor seemed to provoke some pretty severe reactions, one way or the other. To each his or her own, I suppose.



Dear Batfolks,

1) Does the waterproof acid stuff in issue #484 have anything to do with Joker's face?

2) Does the comic go along with the new cartoon or movies?

3) How old are Robin and Batman?

C. Brooks
New Kensington
Pennsylvania

P.S. Please put this in the comics so I have a reason to make my mom buy it for me!

Who needs a reason to buy BATMAN? 1) No. 2) THE BATMAN ADVENTURES goes along with the cartoon. None of the monthly comics go along with the movies, although there were adaptations of the films. 3) Robin is 14, and Batman refuses to divulge his exact age. Secretive little bat.

Dear Moench, Grindberg and Scott,

BATMAN #485 was one of the best stories I have read in years. The suspense started right away when Batman was on the inside of the Black Mask's hideout torn between attacking Black Mask and protecting the kidnapped Fox. The plot went smoothly without any hitches and the artwork was indeed something to behold. Through every page the realism and emotions of the people involved jumped out at the reader, giving him a true scope of the events that were about to take place. Batman and Robin both were portrayed as Guardians of the night in Gotham City. They both had a sinister look about them that told the reader they truly hated crime and would do anything to eradicate it from their city. The final climax was a bit of a shock because after Batman had beaten Black Mask's bodyguard he lost the Black Mask in the river below. The epilogue was first-rate as we see a typical scene of the Batman talking to Commissioner Gordon and discovering that the Black Mask was not Roman Sionis after all. The gang lord was still at large when the sinister face of Batman says, "I did fail." Top-notch, first-rate in every facet of the story.

Bernie Wimberly
Houston, Texas

Black Mask was indeed Roman Sionis, but the body found in the river wasn't.



Dear Scott,

Doug Moench is back and I, for one, am impressed. Despite his long absence, he can still handle the Batman as few writers can.

Batman is one of the most interesting characters in comics; however, this past year of single-issue stories has not allowed much room for character development. It appears Doug has realized this and is taking steps to change the situation. He keeps the confrontation between Batman and Black Mask as the centerpiece of the story without neglecting this title's rich supporting cast. Bruce's confrontation with Vicki last month and the scenes with Gordon this month are fine examples of this. I can only hope that Doug will continue this trend.

Max
Madison, Wisconsin



Dear Scott,

I enjoyed the second part of the Black Mask storyline in BATMAN

#485 a good deal better than the first part from the previous issue.

Let's begin with the cover:

At first glance I thought it wasn't that interesting, but upon further examination I began to see its beauty! The way the artist (Michael Golden?) drew the Gotham buildings looming above the Black Mask was incredible.

As for the interior:

Tom Grindberg and Trevor Scott's artwork didn't do anything for me last issue, so I really can't explain why I thought it was so fantastic this time around! Anyway, I was blown away by their shadowy renditions of Batman, and I hope these guys will do some more Batman stuff in the future. My only artistic complaint is that Robin looked a bit too old in some panels.

Doug Moench's writing was great, of course, but I have a little problem believing that Commissioner Gordon would start to turn against Batman after all these years of trust. Although it might make an interesting storyline in coming issues, I'd rather not see it happen.

Mike Farmer
Alpharetta, Georgia



Dear Denny and Scott,

Doug Moench's "Faces of Death," BATMAN #485, was vintage Dark Knight.

There was a great deal to this story that took place just below the surface: the growing peer relationship between Batman and Robin, the doubt that Sarah is beginning to plant in the mind of James Gordon—doubt over the propriety of his dealing with a vigilante.

Tom Grindberg, Trevor Scott and Adrienne Roy provided an apt backdrop for a story fraught with uncertainties. Shadows and a fog-like mist seemed to pervade each and every panel.

This was a moody, finely crafted tale. A real treat.

Warmest regards,
Jan C. Childress
Brooklyn, New York

The same could be said of your letter, Jan. It won't be, of course, but it could be.



Cover lineup: sketch by Ed Hannigan, pencils by Travis Charest, inks by Ray McCarthy, colors by Bob La Rose.



There's been a little change here in the Batcave, as Jordan B.

Gorfinkel takes over as the new assistant editor on BATMAN and SHADOW OF THE BAT. He's a great writer, a great colorist, and a great guy (although his taste in officemates leaves a little something to be desired), so make him feel nice and welcome. I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed handling the lettercols this past year, not to mention how cool it is to work with guys as incredibly talented as Doug and Jim. Meanwhile, I'll still be seeing you over in TEC and THE BATMAN ADVENTURES. Now for those pesky next-issue boxes...

OVER IN ROBIN: It's the last issue! Go pick it up! **ROBIN III: CRY OF THE HUNTRESS #6**, by Chuck Dixon, Tom Lyle and Bob Smith.

OVER IN SHADOW: What do a labyrinthine castle outside of Gotham and a long-ago medical case involving Dr. Thomas Wayne have in common? Find out when the shadow of the Bat falls on "The Mad Thane of Gotham," in **SHADOW OF THE BAT #10**, by Alan Grant, Mike Collins and Steve Mitchell.

OVER IN DETECTIVE: Under the brilliant direction of the General, the Wardogs are just inches away from capturing a major Gotham police precinct. Can the Batman possibly help when he's so exhausted he can barely stand? **DETECTIVE COMICS #656**, by Chuck Dixon, Scott Hanna and guest artist Tom Mandrake.

NEXT ISSUE: Bane's tired of fooling around. He's going to give Batman a real test...by breaking every inmate out of Arkham. **BATMAN #491**, by Doug Moench and Jim Aparo.

—Scott Peterson
now I must head home
and never...

